



INSTITUTE *for*
SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITIES

Final Report



ISC DemNet Program

in the

Republic of Macedonia

By

Catherine Barnes
Natasa Gaber

Macedonia Democracy Network Program

Final Report

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The Institute *for* Sustainable Communities (ISC)
535 Stone Cutters Way
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone 802-229-2900 – Fax 802-229-2919
www.iscvt.org | isc@iscvt.org

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Photos on front cover: Top to bottom Roma children;
Settlement in Bair, Macedonia; and Gender training

3 February 2005

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) signed a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to launch the Democracy Network (DemNet) program in Macedonia in April 1995. The program has been modified and extended several times and is slated for closure in December 2004. In total, U.S. citizens, via USAID, invested \$ 8.05 million in the development of civil society in Macedonia through the DemNet program.

Purpose of Evaluation

ISC contracted a two-person team to carry out a final evaluation of its DemNet Program in Macedonia.¹ The purpose of the evaluation was to:

- Identify core strengths of the ISC DemNet program, particularly in terms of the effectiveness of program methodologies, strategies, and approaches.
- Identify tangible impacts of the program, both in terms of the organizational sustainability of partner CSOs and the extent to which these CSO have made a difference in their communities and/or society at large.

The assessment team was advised to focus primarily on phases III and IV of the project, which were implemented between 2000 and 2004.

Methodology

From 28 October to 17 November 2004, the evaluation team conducted face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, and telephone interviews with a variety of stakeholders representing government and CSO/community activists at the national and local levels in Macedonia as well as donors, international implementing organizations, grant review panelists, and ISC staff. In total, the evaluation team met with more than 80 individuals and solicited input from 60 CSO partners/grantees based in 18 cities and towns throughout Macedonia. The vast majority of these partners received assistance during phases III and IV of DemNet, although some also participated in the first and/or second phase. A listing of persons and CSOs providing input can be found under Appendix 2.

Interviews and focus group discussions were structured to solicit different perspectives and opinions. A standardized menu of questions was developed to address the macro-level issues of interest to ISC and to facilitate some degree of consistency and comparability of information. In addition, the evaluation team developed three written survey instruments, one each for CSO partners, representatives of community groups (involved the Local Environmental Action Plan and Community Action Plan projects), and small grantees. For a copy of the menu of questions, please refer to Appendix 3. Copies of the written survey instruments and cumulative responses can be found under appendices 5 and 6. The evaluation team also conducted a review of relevant reports, program documentation, polling data, independent research, and press, which supplemented the findings and analysis derived from the interviews. For a complete listing of references, please see Appendix 4.

¹ For the Terms of Reference including team member biographies, please refer to Appendix 1.

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The evaluation yielded extensive data that comprise the ‘Key Findings’ section of this report. These serve as the basis for the conclusions summarized herein. While this summary is useful in acquainting readers with the contents of the report, we would advise a thorough review of ‘Key Findings’ section beginning on page 5 of the report to ensure more accurate and complete comprehension.

Summary of Conclusions Based on Key Findings

*The ISC
DemNet
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communities.*

During its nearly 10-year history, the ISC DemNet program in Macedonia has achieved many results of which the organization, its staff and partners, and USAID can be proud. The major accomplishments and legacies, with an emphasis on the latter half of the program, are summarized in this section. Specifically, DemNet has:

- Contributed to the development of genuinely effective networks within a number of sub-sectors based on shared visions and interests.
- Cultivated successful mentoring relationships between stronger CSOs and their less experienced counterparts.
- Provided for the emergence of anchor organizations (leaders) across a number of sub-sectors.
- Expanded and elevated the influence of CSOs in the sphere of public policy formulation as evidenced by the incorporation of CSO recommendations into new and amended legislation, national strategies, and action plans covering a wide array of issues.
- Empowered CSOs and Citizen’s Groups to address real problems within society and their own communities as well as among disadvantaged, marginalized, and at-risk groups.
- Contributed to the emergence of a core group of CSOs that are equally proficient in service provision and advocacy.
- Led to significant improvements in relationships between partner CSOs and virtually all stakeholder groups including ordinary citizens, other CSOs, government institutions, business, and the mass media.
- Improved cross-sectoral cooperation, particularly between CSOs and government as evidenced by the inclusion of CSO representatives on government task forces, working groups, and multidisciplinary teams at the national level as well as local government support of and participation in community action projects and other CSO initiatives in select localities.
- Increased the organizational capacity, confidence, and prospects for sustainability of an elite group of CSOs that is poised to become Macedonia’s ‘critical mass’ in the years to come and built indigenous training capacity among individual trainers and training organizations.
- Introduced models for multi-stakeholder collaboration that are being replicated in various local communities and adapted to an array of participatory planning processes and community action projects.

- Facilitated the creation of action plans within select communities that have served as a blueprint for local development, provided a sound basis for fundraising, opened up local government decision-making processes, and generated tangible community improvements.
- Launched an ISO, CIRa, with the potential to play a leading role in the development of Macedonia's civil society.

*Partnerships
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With these accomplishments in mind, this team concludes that most of the goals and objectives established by ISC for the last two phases of the DemNet program (and which were the primary focus of this inquiry) were met at the time of the current evaluation. With respect to the objectives established in phase III: (1) CSOs participating in the program have provided a greater voice for citizens to influence public policies; (2) the advocacy and coalition-building [networking] capacities of CSOs participating in the program have been improved, and; (3) models for successful cross-sectoral cooperation in response to local problems have been provided [and replicated].

As for the goals outlined for phase IV: (1) the greater emphasis of DemNet partner CSOs on results has contributed to improved credibility and impact of those CSOs and civil society more generally; (2) the prospects for sustainability of participating CSOs has improved considerably and these organizations are well-positioned to become a critical mass in the future (although critical mass has not yet been achieved); (3) partnerships between DemNet CSOs and with government and business have succeeded in defining challenges and implementing solutions (although considerably more progress was made with government than with the business community), and; (4) through the sub-sector 'anchor' organizations, a variety of networks such as SEGA, and CIRa, in particular, mechanisms and entities have been put into place that are committed to – and have the requisite skills, to support other CSOs in the aftermath of the DemNet program.

Major Lessons Learned

Throughout the course of the DemNet program, ISC has made a considerable effort to identify lessons learned. And, a review of program documentation and discussions with staff suggest that these lessons have been applied to methodologies in order to achieve better results. While there have been many more lessons learned through the years than can be efficiently presented here, this section focuses on some of the major lessons learned, particularly in the latter half of the project.

- The provision of integrated assistance comprised of training, technical assistance and grants has a greater impact on the prospects for CSO sustainability than the provision of grants solely for the purpose of project implementation, i.e. investments in internal capacity building positively affect external performance and impact.
- The development of training based on formal organizational needs assessments and participatory planning methods better meets the needs of partner CSOs. And, the provision of this specially tailored training to a broader set of individuals within CSOs and communities contributes to increased and sustained application of skills.

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- Partnerships between CSOs, whether via networks, coalitions, or mentoring relationships, and across sectors, i.e. with government and business, lead to the achievement of greater results and provide a valuable multiplier effect in terms of knowledge transfer. The creation of real partnerships, however, takes time.
- More focused and in-depth approaches have tended to produce more easily identifiable and strategically oriented results, e.g. focal area approach, than general and broad approaches that tend to diffuse impact.
- The cultivation intermediary support organizations, such as CIRa, that will constitute indigenous infrastructure supporting civil society development in the future, requires sequential and longer-term development.
- The provision of training and the application of skills on an incremental basis in LEAP and CAP communities, when combined with “hands-on” management by ISC and the lead CSO throughout the entire process produces better results than “front loaded” training and less rigorous management.
- The success of LEAPs and CAPs is also contingent upon the development of constructive relationships between lead CSOs/Citizens’ Groups and local officials and adequate “buy-in” by those officials from the outset of the project. More generally, open and constructive relationships between government and CSOs are essential to achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable results.
- Rapid progression from planning to implementation in LEAP and CAP communities allowed CSOs/Citizen’s Groups to achieve tangible results that were essential to building trust and confidence upon which engagement and momentum can be sustained.
- Well-developed monitoring and evaluation plans and the consistent and continual collection of performance data are essential for ISC to effectively identify and capture its results, promote its successes, and build institutional memory.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the many ISC staff members both in Vermont and in Skopje, who contributed a significant amount of time answering what likely seemed to be an endless array of questions and responding to a multitude of requests for data and documentation as well as to those who provided administrative and logistical support. Appreciation is also due to all partner CSOs, community activists, and other stakeholders who participated in face-to-face or telephone interviews and focus groups and completed the written questionnaires. This investment in time and effort as well as the thoughtfulness and frankness of the input received greatly contributed to the team’s findings and conclusions.

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I. Introduction

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II. Overview

A. Purpose of Evaluation

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The evaluation team also conducted a review of relevant reports, program documentation, polling data, independent research, and press, which supplemented the findings and analysis derived from the interviews. For a complete listing of references, please see Appendix 4.

While the team collected a significant amount of interesting and useful information, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the evaluation and urge caution with respect to drawing direct correlations or extrapolating data. Specifically, the team offers the following caveats with respect to its findings:

² For the Terms of Reference including team member biographies, please refer to Appendix 1.

- Given the size of the team and the limited time available, it was not possible to meet with all identified stakeholders, to travel beyond the major cities referenced below, or to conduct focus groups with ordinary citizens.
- Since there were a limited number of site visits, the team was not able to ‘test’ statements made by the CSOs, e.g. asking them to produce hard copies of their strategic plans or being able to observe the provision of services or levels of activity.
- As noted in the scope of work for this evaluation, particular emphasis was placed on the third and fourth phases of the DemNet program as these had not yet been evaluated. The majority of CSO representatives and local staff interviewed were involved in the latter half of the program.
- While the team did interview the current COP and various Vermont-based staff who were responsible for managing the program throughout its nearly 10-year history, it did not conduct interviews with previous ISC Chiefs of Party (COPs).³
- The sample size for the surveys was quite small and, with the exception of the small grantees, was not randomly selected. In total, 29 partner CSOs responded to the CSO survey, 20 small grantees participated in the telephone survey, and 10 lead CSOs completed the LEAP/CAP survey (they did not also complete the CSO survey).
- The CSOs with which the team met were beneficiaries of DemNet as well as other USAID and foreign donor funded programs. In terms of their organizational capacity and professionalism, it is fair to say that they are among the elite of Macedonia’s civil society.
- Due to the diversity of funding sources of most of the CSOs interviewed, it can be difficult to fully isolate the impact of the DemNet program from investments and interventions coming from other sources.

C. Background on CSOs Participating in the Evaluation

A vast majority of the CSOs interviewed, i.e. those participating in focus groups and completing written surveys, received assistance in phases III and IV (2000 – 2004) of the project, as represented by the two tables below, although some were also involved in earlier phases of DemNet.

Table 1: Distribution of CSO Respondents Receiving DemNet Assistance by Year⁴

In which year(s) has your CSO received some form of DemNet Assistance? (<i>check all that apply</i>)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>13</u>

Of this group, 24% of the 29 respondents indicated that they received no assistance during phase III, while only 3% said that they received no assistance during phase IV. In terms of their mission, 31% of the CSOs described themselves as an informal association of citizens serving their local community, 28% as a service organization, 17% as an issue-based advocacy organization, seven percent as an intermediary support organization (ISO), and three percent as a business or professional organization. For more

³ The previous evaluation of the DemNet program carried out by Thomas J. Cook, PhD and Mihajlo Popovski, PhD for Development Associations, Inc. (DAI), focused primarily on phases I and II of the project and the first part of phase III. For more information, please refer to the report, *Evaluation of the Macedonia DemNet Program, Task Order No. 805*, dated February 2002.

⁴ Based on 29 respondents and a multiple-choice option.

information on the types of CSOs that completed the survey and the assistance they received through DemNet, please refer to questions 1 – 6 of the written survey contained under Appendix 7.

Table 2: Distribution of Community Respondents Receiving DemNet Assistance by Year⁵

In which year(s) has your community received DemNet assistance in support of a LEAP/ CAP project? (<i>check all that apply</i>)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>

Of this group, 70% of the 10 respondents represented CAP communities, while the remainder represented LEAP communities. Communities targeted by the LEAP and CAP projects ranged in size from 800 to 37,189 inhabitants.

The small grants program was initiated in phase III and, as such, all 20 respondents to the telephone survey received assistance during that phase.

During the course of its fieldwork, the evaluation team traveled beyond Skopje to Bitola and Prilep. CSOs from other localities were brought either to Skopje or Prilep to ensure that the group was more geographically representative. Ultimately, CSOs from 18 cities and towns were given an opportunity to provide some form of input. These included: Berovo, Bitola, Debar, Delchevo, Kavadarci, Krushevo, Kumanovo, Miravci, Nikole, Ohrid, Pehcevo, Prilep, Probistip, Skopje, Stip, Strumica, Sveti Nikola, Tetovo, and Veles.

D. Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the many ISC staff members both in Vermont and in Skopje, who contributed a significant amount of time answering what likely seemed to be an endless array of questions and responding to a multitude of requests for data and documentation as well as to those who provided administrative and logistical support. Appreciation is also due to all partner CSOs, community activists, and other stakeholders who participated in face-to-face or telephone interviews and focus groups and completed the written questionnaires. This investment in time and effort as well as the thoughtfulness and frankness of the input received greatly contributed to the findings contained herein.

It is also worth noting that during ISC's nearly 10-year history in Macedonia, the DemNet program has produced many more success stories than can be adequately conveyed in this report. In fact, the long duration of the program has allowed for a more natural evolution of CSO and cross-sectoral partnerships based on mutual trust and interest. This natural evolution of organizations, relationships, and networks has had a positive impact on the prospects for sustainability. As such, some results have come to the fore that were not evident during previous evaluations and assessments of the program. While a number of success stories have been highlighted herein to illustrate and reinforce certain findings and conclusions, the absence of others in no way diminishes their value.

⁵ Based on 10 respondents and a multiple-choice option.

III. Context for DemNet Implementation⁶

Since its independence in 1991, Macedonia has struggled to overcome the social, political, and economic legacies of socialism and the collapse of Yugoslavia while confronting the devastating impact of ethnic conflict just beyond and ultimately within its own borders. This environment presented many challenges to ISC, which arrived in Macedonia in 1995, and its partners within civil society.

By the spring of 1998, at the outset of the second phase of DemNet, the situation in Kosovo was tense and rapidly deteriorating. The conflict threatened to spill over into Macedonia as hundreds of thousands of refugees crossed the border into Western Macedonia, in some cases doubling the population of the towns to which they fled. This exodus of refugees into Macedonia exacerbated the country's unresolved domestic tensions between ethnic groups. UN sanctions against Serbia had an adverse impact on Macedonian trade. The economic situation worsened rapidly as enterprises closed their doors and workers lost their jobs. The internal security situation grew considerably more unstable with the outbreak of sporadic violence. Within this context, many CSOs in Macedonia, including DemNet grantees, shifted their focus to respond to the humanitarian needs brought about by the refugee crisis. At the same time, ISC made significant adjustments to its planned programming for a period of six months during the height of the NATO action in Kosovo.

In February 2001, the DemNet program was again disrupted by ethnic conflict, this time within Macedonia's own borders. An armed conflict broke out between a force of Albanian rebels and the army of the Republic of Macedonia. The conflict escalated quickly and the proximity of rebels to Skopje raised tensions across the country as hostilities and suspicions on both sides became more entrenched. In June, ethnic Macedonians rioted at the Parliament. Public animosity toward the role of the international community's role in the conflict led to attacks on various Western embassies. As a result, the U.S. Embassy ordered a full evacuation of all non-essential personnel that again caused an interruption in DemNet programming. Following major international mediation, the four leading political parties signed the Ohrid Peace Accord, which triggered a disarmament effort by the rebels and initiated work on a series of reform measures. While ISC was able to quickly resume its programming, the operating environment had profoundly changed and the damage was extensive:

- Many communities were not able to withstand the pressures of broader conflict. The civil discourse and community dialogue that had existed before the conflict were extremely difficult to achieve.
- In ethnically mixed communities, the poor security environment and fears of what inter-ethnic dialogue might unleash inhibited public events and contacts.
- Sensitivities about language presented a fundamental challenge to communication between ethnic groups.
- Interest in project activities waned as people became more reluctant to talk about the future and as political space evaporated.
- A vast majority of citizens had little hope for the future, as GDP fell by 4.5% that year and unemployment shot to nearly 31% and with less than 40% of the working age population working in the official economy.

⁶ This section draws heavily from ISC's own programmatic documents including quarterly and summary reports for the period.

Beyond these massive problems, widespread corruption and a political spoils system had a corrosive affect on society, while centralized political power and the lack of commitment to practices of good governance seriously undermined government's ability to effectively respond to citizen's needs and interact with civil society.⁷

By the final years of phase IV of the program (2003-2004), a number of internal and external developments converged to impact relations between civil society and government at various levels. The Ohrid Peace Accord required a number of fundamental reforms including those related to local governance, specifically decentralization and re-districting. As a result of these reforms, local governments were granted greater decision-making power and authority over their own budgets. The prospect of local empowerment created the necessary basis for a more meaningful relationship between civil society actors and local decision-makers. Mayors began to look at CSOs as potential partners capable of helping local government better implement its new mandate. CSOs began to view local government as better able to address community needs and as a potential source of funding, whether through grants or service contracts. At the national level, the carrot of integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions (EU and NATO) proved to be an important factor in raising awareness among government officials regarding the need to engage civil society on policy development. As such, there has been a thawing of relations between government and civil society at multiple levels with stakeholders on each side being more receptive to cooperation and cognizant of the mutual benefits of partnership. Also during this time, some leading CSOs began to look outward, beyond purely localized problems, to challenges of a regional and global nature, e.g. combating human trafficking and HIV/AIDs.

IV. Key Findings

A. DemNet Assistance Strategies

As the DemNet program evolved over the years, ISC employed various approaches to – and models for – encouraging the organizational development and public engagement of CSOs. The following section of the report explores various models used throughout the ISC DemNet program in Macedonia. The evaluation team has attempted to identify distinct approaches, although not all are mutually exclusive and many were combined during various phases of the program. While the primary emphasis is placed on approaches used in phases III and IV, some that were used in earlier phases are also included. The comparative advantages and disadvantages of various approaches, based on stakeholder and evaluator impressions, are also highlighted. For an overview of the development of the DemNet program, please see Appendix 5.

1. Comparative Approaches and Models

Integrated Assistance Package

Throughout phases III and IV, many CSOs received what could be described as integrated assistance packages comprised of grants, training, and technical assistance and, in some cases, opportunities to participate in foreign study tours. During phase III, ISC provided such multi-faceted assistance to CSOs carried over from phase II (15) as well as a new set of CSOs (28) and – to a certain extent to – CSOs leading community action via LEAP and CAP projects (11).⁸ During phase IV, this was provided to 40 CSOs

⁷ For an excellent analysis of the negative ramifications of the political spoils system on Macedonia's development, see *Assessment of the Civil Society Sector in Macedonia* (28 August 2003), prepared by Harry Blair et al. for MSI, p. 43.

⁸ During phases II and III, training provided to LEAP and CAP communities was typically front-loaded and offered to a limited number of individuals. By phase IV, adjustments had been made to the program to expand the number of individuals receiving training, to provide incremental training and application of skills, and offer more intensive technical assistance throughout the entirety of the project both during CAP planning and implementation.

organized according to four focal areas including the CAP communities (discussed in greater detail in subsequent paragraphs).

Virtually all stakeholders interviewed, both beneficiaries and other donors, noted the special niche of ISC with respect to integrated assistance. Specifically, most other donors provide grants absent training and technical assistance or training without grants. As a result – and at this stage of development – the integrated assistance offered by ISC was perceived to be more valuable than limited forms of assistance offered by other donors. The provision of training and TA was deemed to build the capacity and sustainability of the CSO, while at the same time supporting project implementation. And, the provision of grants provided CSOs with an opportunity to apply newfound skills. Due to the in-depth nature of the integrated assistance packages, most beneficiaries referred to ISC as a partner in their development rather than a donor.

As the program evolved, this approach appeared to become more sophisticated. For example:

- Stakeholders familiar with the program from its earlier stages believed that the ultimate linkage of training, TA, and grants was more effective than pursuing these as separate (parallel) tracks of assistance.
- The increased specialization of training and TA, based on formal needs assessments and participatory-planning involving beneficiaries was also seen as contributing to the successfulness of this approach.
- CSO representatives also noted that, with a few exceptions, the increasing use of indigenous trainers (at first external/affiliated trainers which were then supplemented by the DemNet staff) to more practical instruction that was most conducive to the Macedonian context and experience of the trainees.⁹
- Expanding the provision of training to greater numbers of staff and volunteers within each CSO as well as to partner CSOs within networks and coalitions was also identified as contributing to greater institutional – as opposed to individual – sustainability.¹⁰

With respect to the quality and efficacy of various types of assistance:

- 94% of CSO respondents gave the ISC staff their highest ratings, i.e. either a '4' or a '5' on a five point scale, for the quality of advising services.
- 86% of CSO respondents gave ISC their highest ratings for the training they received.
- 93% of CSO respondents gave ISC their highest ratings for the sufficiency of their grant.

⁹ Several CSO representatives noted, however, that there were inconsistencies in the knowledge, skills, and professionalism of various indigenous trainers and training organizations, which affected the quality of some training sessions. It should be noted, however, that this observation was made with respect to the external/affiliated trainers and not to the ISC local staff.

¹⁰ Several CSOs requested that their network partners be allowed to participate in ISC sponsored training events even though the latter were not otherwise receiving assistance through DemNet. In general, ISC granted these requests.

Table 3: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Assistance Package

APPROACH I: INTEGRATED ASSISTANCE PACKAGE <i>(training, technical assistance, and grants)</i>	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Greatest beneficiary satisfaction levels	More labor intensive for ISC staff to manage the in-depth assistance of grants-management, specially tailored training, and on-going TA
Distinguishes ISC assistance from other donors (niche)	
Characterized by specially tailored and in-depth support	
Creates a sense of partnership	
Contributes to organizational capacity and viability	Limits the number of program beneficiaries
Provides opportunities for application of skills	
Maximizes prospects for success	

Among the positive sentiments echoed by many of the project's participants:

The value of the training and technical assistance we received from ISC far exceeded the monetary value of the grants. Maybe ISC's grants weren't as big as the other donors, but the education component was definitely more valuable.

The most remarkable thing was the project coordinators at ISC. Our CSO received directed guidance. We needed this because we were not experienced enough in all aspects of NGO management.

There was a continuity of communication that was not our experience with other donors.

ISC helped us identify our needs through an organizational needs assessment. Other donors just gave us training without knowing what our needs were. ISC bothered to figure this out first and then design training.

The experience we had with other donors was that they gave us funds for projects that would end up unsuccessfully. This wasn't the case with ISC because they were more professional and more engaged in terms of training and mentoring.

Stakeholders also repeatedly mentioned the usefulness of the written materials provided by ISC and, for those who participated, the value of study tours conducted in cooperation with World Learning. In addition, CSOs active in the focal areas established in phase IV, commented on the value of the technical training, e.g. anti-trafficking, HIV/AIDs, conflict mitigation strategies, that they received in addition to traditional CSO capacity building topics.

Emphasis on Focal Areas

During the fourth phase of DemNet, ISC changed its approach, opting to support CSOs active in a number of focal areas. These included youth, gender and marginalized populations (with an emphasis on HIV/AIDs and human trafficking), and conflict reduction plus community development (CAPs). Cutting across each focal area was a new emphasis on working with Roma communities. With the exception of human trafficking, which is a relatively new area of work in Macedonia, ISC had already been working with CSOs active in these fields (or with these populations) for varying periods of time, if not in the strategic manner afforded by the focal area approach. Stakeholders credited the focal area approach with:

- Encouraging greater focus and specialization among CSOs;
- Facilitating networking within sub-sectors;
- Fostering issue-based advocacy coalitions, and;
- Building a core of ‘anchor’ organizations within each sub-sector that could undertake both advocacy and service provision as well as provide mentoring to weaker CSOs active in the same fields.

The evaluation team also noted that it appeared to be much easier to identify significant impacts, across a variety of indicators, stemming from this approach as compared to more generalized and broad-based forms of assistance (as will be discussed in the “Outcomes and Impacts’ section beginning on page 17).

Table 4: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of Focal Areas

APPROACH II: EMPHASIS ON FOCAL AREAS <i>(e.g. youth, gender and marginalized, conflict reduction, community development)</i>	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Develops sub-sector anchor organizations	Closed to CSOs outside focal areas
Provides for specially tailored and in-depth assistance	Limits the number of beneficiaries
Creates a sense of partnership	Once priorities set, can’t address emerging needs
Contributes to organizational capacity and viability	Potential that priorities may be donor driven (e.g. anti-trafficking and HIV/ AIDS)
Addresses real needs within society	
Encourages greater focus/specialization of CSOs	Danger that focal areas will be defined too narrowly
Better prospects for success/Easier to show results	
Better able to raise public visibility of CSOs	Less emphasis on broader civil society issues
Fosters sub-sector networking and mentoring	ISC staff may become too narrowly focused on their focal areas, adversely affecting horizontal information –sharing and cooperation.
Facilitates issue-based advocacy coalitions	
Allows ISC staff to develop a technical specialization	
Easier for ISC staff to manage	

At the same time, some stakeholders had reservations about this approach:

- A number of CSOs and donors wondered whether at least some of the focal areas were too narrowly defined, for example the emphasis placed on school-based programs, and students in particular, in the conflict reduction focal area and the relative lack of focus (or late focus) on more systemic problems, for example government policies on a full range of ethnic issues including segregated classrooms, regressive tendencies within the Ministry of Education and school administrations, counter-productive attitudes at home (influence of the family), and other problems that exacerbate ethnic tensions, e.g. economic stagnation. Many CSOs representing this focal area readily admitted the need to focus on more systemic and self-sustaining approaches in the future and questioned the impact that they have had via the more narrowly focused (and short-term) interventions.
- Not unlike many other programming environments in which the focal area approach has been used, stakeholders wondered whether the chosen focal areas reflected the greatest priorities facing Macedonia, or rather the interests of donors. The relative lack of CSO activity in the field of anti-trafficking prior to the engagement of ISC and various donors provides a case in point.

Donor representatives admitted difficulties in identifying qualified CSOs to carry out such activities. And, 67% of CSOs respondents active in HIV/AIDS admitted that they decided to expand existing services or introduce new ones on the basis of the priorities of foreign donors/partners.¹¹ None questioned the needs addressed, but rather whether the priorities were truly local.¹² In response, some stakeholders saw the willingness of CSOs to engage on issues of regional and global significance as an important sign of the maturation of Macedonia's civil society.

- Finally, there also seemed to be a lack of attention among the focal area CSOs to broader issues pertaining to civil society development in Macedonia. Many did not appear to understand the nature and substance of the current amendments being considered to the 1998 Law on Associations and Foundations.¹³ When asked about critical steps that need to be undertaken in the coming years to solidify the position of the third sector and to ensure the sustainability of CSOs, many identified needs within their own organizations or the sub-sector in which they were active.¹⁴

Despite these reservations, overall impressions of the focal area approach were quite positive. And, many of the CSOs working in these areas did achieve significant results in phase IV, as will be discussed in greater detail in section IV.B, beginning on page 17.

Focus On a Core Group of CSOs

This approach focuses on a smaller number of CSOs and seeks to build their capacity and leadership through intensive support involving training, technical assistance, and grants. Equal or greater emphasis is placed on CSO strengthening relative to project implementation. The second phase of DemNet assistance in Macedonia best exhibits this approach, although it might also apply to certain components of Phase III assistance and to the select groups of CSOs representing a limited number of focal areas in Phase IV. As such, many of the advantages of this approach are similar to those associated with the focal area approach:

Table 5: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of Focus on Core Group of CSOs

APPROACH III: FOCUS ON A CORE GROUP OF CSOs	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Encourages the creation of critical mass of strong CSOs	Open to criticisms of elitism
Provides for specially tailored and in-depth assistance	Limits the number of beneficiaries
Creates a sense of partnership	If networking or mentoring between CSOs, is weak, no multiplier effect.
Contributes to organizational capacity and viability	
Rewards proven performance and leadership	
Maximizes prospects for success	
Easier to show results	
Easier for ISC staff to manage	

¹¹ By comparison, only 29% of CSOs active in conflict management and 13% of CSOs involved in youth activities admitted that they based such decisions on donor priorities.

¹² Not surprisingly, many CSOs, when asked about the priority needs facing the country, identified their own area of activity as most crucial.

¹³ This should be understood in terms of the current reforms rather than with respect to the original adoption of the 1998 Law after which ISC strove to inform CSOs about the new law and its ramifications through a series of brochures.

¹⁴ Notable exceptions included the need to reduce the tax burden on CSOs and to increase domestic funding sources, e.g. through greater support by municipal government and creating tax incentives for corporate philanthropy.

Community Action Models

A consistent feature of the DemNet program dating from Phase II, was the use of community action models to address pressing environmental and socio-economic needs at the community level. Through a participatory process, multiple stakeholders representing CSOs, ordinary citizens, technical experts, and representatives of local government, public institutions, and the business sector identify priorities for community development, create an action plan for adoption by the municipal council, and, ultimately, implement activities aimed at addressing those priorities.

Initially, this approach focused on Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAPs), building upon the ecological orientation of the DemNet program in Phase I.¹⁵ Five communities received support from ISC to develop environmental action plans in Phase II.¹⁶ Once the responsible municipal councils formally adopted the plans, ISC provided financial support for implementation of at least one of the priorities listed in each plan and assisted communities with efforts to leverage funding from other sources. Implementation of the LEAPs developed by five communities in Phase II and a Phase I CSO proceeded during Phase III. Ultimately, all but one of these communities went on to produce results identified as priorities in their local environmental plan.

Also during Phase III, the methodology was adapted to broaden its focus to address economic concerns and the social benefits derived from economic growth. These were referred to as Community Action Plans (CAPs). Seven communities were initially selected. Two communities encountered problems during the selection process. Basically, the lead CSOs could not secure adequate 'buy-in' or cooperation from newly elected mayors and municipal councilors. This was a prerequisite for finalizing selection of the community and proceeding to the planning phase. In a couple of instances, there were also problems with implementation. One lead CSO failed to produce an adequate proposal for implementation after it had successfully completed the planning process. In another community, the lead CSO proved to be a sham and had to be replaced. Ultimately, only four of seven of the initial CAP communities in Phase III proceeded to the implementation stage and one of these failed to sustain its momentum.¹⁷ This led to some speculation that the CAP process was too unfocused and as a result, less likely to produce results than the LEAP process.¹⁸

As a result, ISC undertook an internal review of its community action projects (both LEAP and CAP communities during phases II and III), which included an evaluation by an independent consultant as well as a series of in-country consultations carried out by Vermont based staff. The evaluation found that the LEAP and CAP projects were generally well perceived and viewed as having a positive impact by those who were aware of them, contributed to networking and cross-sectoral partnerships, improved trust in CSOs, and succeeded in producing an action plan as a reference document.¹⁹ Otherwise, the findings were mixed, with site visits producing rather different impressions than the data collected through telephone and written surveys might have suggested. Based upon interviews conducted on-site, the following weaknesses were identified:

¹⁵ While an ISC commitment to select communities to develop and implement LEAPs began only in Phase II, the LEAP methodology was shared with many of the environmental CSOs supported in Phase I.

¹⁶ An additional three communities were funded to carry out LEAP planning processes with funding from the UN, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the Regional Environmental Center.

¹⁷ According to several stakeholders, finding evidence of the Tetovo CAP today would be extremely difficult.

¹⁸ Also, there was no logical CSO to spearhead the process as was the case with the environmental CSOs and the LEAPs, i.e. no CSOs specializing in community development.

¹⁹ See report *Evaluating ISC's Community Action Projects* (September 2003), by Victoria Gellis, p.p. 6-7.

- Limited inclusion, i.e. some lead CSOs were weak in reaching and attracting all levels and sectors in the community and tended to lean toward elites rather than achieving a necessary balance of stakeholders.
- Insufficient awareness and ownership of the project, i.e. limited availability of the approved action plan, poor promotional efforts, poor communication between those involved in the planning and those tasked with implementation, and failure to link the planning process with improvements within the community that stemmed from implementation of the plan.
- Inadequate implementation and follow through, i.e. action plan seen as an end result, more emphasis placed on process than on results, implementation dependent upon funding (often foreign donors), timeframe between beginning of the planning process and tangible results stemming from implementation too long, inadequate monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Uneven performance by CSOs leading the LEAP or CAP process, i.e. some CSOs better able to lead the process and successfully meet challenges, some CSOs lacked contacts and legitimacy within the community, and problems with politicized CSOs.

According to the telephone and written surveys, which were directed at the lead CSOs and members of the citizens' groups, impressions were considerably higher with respect to CSO management of the projects, provision of information including accessibility to the approved plan, awareness levels within the community, the representativeness of the stakeholders' group, and the pace of implementation.²⁰ Despite these mixed findings, ISC was able to identify an extensive list of lessons learned that it applied to subsequent CAP activities (including modification of the CAP methodology). Among the key actions taken in response to the lessons learned²¹:

- The planning process was shortened, while retaining all participatory aspects.
- ISC staff became more directly and continually involved during all stages of the project.
- Training was provided directly in each community, for a broader set of stakeholders, and on an incremental basis that allowed for steady application of newfound skills.
- Prospective lead CSOs were more thoroughly screened before any commitments were formalized.
- Greater emphasis was placed on building the capacity of CSOs tasked with leading the CAPs process through training and TA, i.e. above and beyond training in community action methodologies.
- Training manuals were augmented with more reference and sample materials, including case studies from prior community efforts and document templates.
- Public information and outreach efforts were increased.
- Ties with local authorities were strengthened from the outset.
- A results orientation was encouraged with skills built and applied in monitoring and evaluation.

²⁰ Ibid., p.p. 7 – 27. See also trip report of Paul Markowitz dated 22-24 September 2003.

²¹ For a more detailed listing of lessons learned, please see Annex 10. See also the trip report of Paul Markowitz dated 28 September – 1 October 2003 for additional lessons learned from CAPs implemented in poor communities.

By the fourth phase of DemNet, ISC had made a number of adjustments to its community action methodology ('adaptive management') in response to these lessons learned and had shifted its focus to small, poor communities. These were defined as communities of 1,500 to 15,000 inhabitants with a household income of less than 4,000 denars (approximately \$75) per month.²² Three of the four communities selected to participate in the CAP process were Roma communities.²³ These included Prilep (Trizla), Bitola (Bair), and Delchevo. Miravci was selected as the fourth community. In addition, the CAP model was further refined to meet the special needs of poor communities. First, certain adjustments were made to accommodate highly illiterate populations, in particular providing for the oral transfer of information. Second, CSO mentoring relationships were also established between stronger CSOs and weaker ones tasked with leading CAPs in poor communities. Third, ISC staff provided more intensive oversight, given that poor communities had virtually no prior experience in addressing community problems. At the time of the current evaluation all of the phase IV CAP communities were proceeding with implementation of one or more priorities (this is discussed in greater detail beginning on page 41).

With respect to the sufficiency of support provided by ISC to LEAP or CAP processes:

- 90% of CSOs leading LEAP or CAP processes in their community gave ISC staff their highest ratings (a '4' of '5' on a five point scale) for the quality of advising and for the training provided.
- 80% gave ISC their highest ratings for the sufficiency of the grant.
- 90% of respondents believed that all participants responsible for planning or implementing LEAPs/CAPs had a good or complete grasp of the process (methodology).

In addition, stakeholders commented on the value of various aspects of the CAP process that were characteristic of the final phase of DemNet, in particular:

- Incremental training and application of skills throughout the planning and implementation phases (rather than front-loading the training).
- Continual engagement and advising by ISC staff throughout both the planning and implementation phases.
- The provision of detailed reference and sample materials.
- The introduction of mentoring relationships to build the capacity and improve the prospects for success of lead CSOs in poor communities.
- The use of benchmarks to measure and sustain progress.

²² As per definition provided in ISC's *Workplan for Implementing Community Development Action Plans for Poor Communities in Macedonia*.

²³ This was part of a broader effort to more strategically address the development of Roma communities. Four communities and one CSO were supported under the community development focal area, three CSOs were funded under the gender and marginalized focal area, and two CSOs worked under the conflict reduction focal area. For more information, please see ISC's *Update on Activities Improving the Status of Roma in Macedonia*.

Table 6: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of Community Action Models

APPROACH IV: COMMUNITY ACTION MODELS (LEAPs and CAPs)	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Focuses on a manageable set of issues	Requires extensive and on-going engagement by ISC staff to ensure momentum and success
Creates model/precedent for participatory planning	
Facilitates cross-sectoral cooperation	Participatory planning and relationship building take time
Provides a methodical approach to problem solving	
Builds human capital within community	Vulnerable to political problems within the community
Provides opportunity for direct application of skills	
Creates a blueprint for community development	Achievement of systemic results requires longer term implementation
Approved plan provides a basis for fundraising	
Implementation projects ideal for leveraging funds	Significant problems of a systemic or structural nature may undermine the impact of smaller scale solutions.
Directs assistance to small communities (CAPs, IV)	
Quick transition from planning to implementation (and achievement of tangible results) builds confidence and trust	Some community priorities may be too expensive for donors to fund or too ambitious for CSOs to address at this time.
Use of lead CSO provides an organizational mechanism for continued activity and support within the community and access to a broader network of civil society organizations	

The comments offered by stakeholders taken together with the relatively greater record of success of the phase IV CAPs (100% proceeding to implementation) and the results achieved suggest that the adjustments made to the CAPs methodology were particularly effective. On the basis of the findings of this evaluation, the assessment team cannot conclude that either the LEAP or the CAP methodology is more effective than its counterpart in achieving tangible results provided that the methodologies are adequately designed and adapted to local circumstances and sufficient management and oversight are provided by ISC and the lead CSOs. In terms of identifying successes, it is perhaps more useful to consider each community individually, viewing results in terms of the point at which they started (baseline). For information on tangible results achieved by successful LEAP and CAP communities, please see page 41.

Table 7 : Funding for LEAP and CAP Planning and Implementation Projects

Community	DEMNET PHASE II	DEMNET PHASE III			DEMNET PHASE IV		
	LEAP Plan	LEAP Implement	CAP Plan	CAP Implement	LEAP Implement	CAP Plan	CAP Implement
Debar	✓	✓			✓		
Kavadarci	✓	✓			No Results ²⁴		
Labunista ²⁵		✓					
Pehcevo	✓	✓					
Probistip	✓	✓					
Sveti Nikole	✓	✓					

²⁴ Implementation of the Kavadarci LEAP began, but was not completed due to problems over compliance with USAID environmental regulations and requirements. The lead CSO fulfilled its project obligations, but there were no tangible results.

²⁵ ISC Funded LEAP planning project during Phase I of DemNet.

Bitola			✓	✓			
Caska			✓	Closed ²⁶			
Cucer-Sandevo			✓	✓			
Dellagozhda			Cancelled ²⁷				
Krivogastani			Cancelled ²⁸				
Krushevo ²⁹			✓	✓			✓
Tetovo			✓	✓			✓
Prilep (Trizla)						✓	✓
Bitola (Bair)						✓	✓
Delchevo						✓	✓
Miravci						✓	✓

NOTE: In some cases, e.g. Krushevo and Tetovo CAPs, implementation activities begun in Phase III carried over into Phase IV and to not represent separate activities or follow-on funding.

It is also worth noting that during the summer of 2004, the Ministry of Environment commissioned a comparative analysis of various LEAP models being utilized throughout Macedonia, including those funded by ISC, the Regional Environmental Center (REC), the Environmental Fund, and GTZ. ISC's LEAP methodology was judged to be the best in terms of the public participation component. At the same time, however, the study concluded that some of the CSOs leading LEAP processes were not always well suited to certain kinds of implementation.

Small Grants Program

A grants program, absent accompanying training or technical assistance,³⁰ was built into phase III of the DemNet program as a means of reaching a broader range of Macedonian NGOs than were being reached through the CSO strengthening and community action components of the program. The aims of the grants program were to address resource gaps in the CSO sector, encourage additional public outreach by CSOs, and provide USAID with greater flexibility to respond to developing opportunities and challenges.³¹ As such, funding was provided for wide-ranging activities, although some funds were earmarked for conflict resolution and inter-ethnic initiatives following the signing of the Ohrid Peace Accords and for voter education and mobilization in advance of the 2002 parliamentary elections.³² Ultimately, 119 grants were awarded. Of these, 108 were directed at CSOs that were not otherwise receiving support through the DemNet program. Grants ranged in size from \$500 to \$5,000 and totaled \$412,826 during the course of phase III.

²⁶ The Caska project was closed because the lead CSO was unable to produce a proposal that met ISC criteria for funding (consistent with USAID regulations and requirements). Relations between the CSO and the mayor were also poor and jeopardized the prospects for success of any implementation project.

²⁷ This community could not proceed with planning due to a lack of 'buy-in' by the local leadership, a political problem with the newly elected municipal council and mayor.

²⁸ This community could not proceed with planning due to a lack of 'buy-in' by the local leadership, a political problem with the newly elected municipal council and mayor.

²⁹ The CSO leading this process had to be changed due to fraudulent representation and lack of public legitimacy of the initial CSO, 'Friend of the World,' which as of September 2003 was essentially defunct. For more information, please refer to the report by Victoria Gellis, *Evaluating ISC's Community Action Plans* (September 2003).

³⁰ The term technical assistance (TA), which is used throughout this report, refers to expert advising (both technical and managerial) and moral support provided by the ISC staff on a regular basis.

³¹ The grants program also enabled USAID to supplement other projects it was funding and to maximize synergies between various initiatives.

³² In addition to the grants program that was built into phase III, there was also a set-aside at the beginning of the program for a separate small grants program in support of local elections.

Table 8: Provision of Small Grants to CSOs in Phase III

LOCAL ELECTIONS	ROUND I	ROUND II	ROUND III ³³	ROUND IV	ROUND V ³⁴
21 CSOs	21 CSOs	22 CSOs	27 CSOs	15 CSOs	12 CSOs
\$160,000	\$34,033	\$64,450	\$77,315	\$27,433	\$49,595

In addition to election related programming and conflict mitigation efforts, the small grants program funded such diverse activities as bee-keeping, herb marketing, HIV/AIDS awareness, preparation of the first sign-language dictionary in Albanian language, an environmental press center, model UN, and a hospital-based volunteer program for sick children.

The evaluation team randomly selected 20 small grantees, approximately 20% of the total, to participate in a telephone interview which addressed a variety of topics including the basis for designing their projects, the impact of funding, the consequences of a lack of training and TA, the prospects of the CSO's sustainability, and continuing needs. It found that:

- 75% of the respondents developed their project on the basis of some form of needs assessment.
- 80% were able to leverage other funds as a result of the small grant.
- 70% were able to expand their services and/or activities through the small grants program.
- 90% were satisfied with the short-term impact of the program, although 95% felt that their results would have been enhanced if they had also received training and/or advising.
- 95% rated the prospects for sustainability of their NGO as either high or good.

The evaluation team questioned the last finding for a number of reasons. First, the small grantees were considerably more confident about their sustainability than their counterparts that had received integrated assistance over a longer period of time. This may be a situation whereby the 'more you know' the better able you are to realistically assess the current situation and future prospects of your organization. And, although all the CSOs awarded grants through this program had proven project implementation experience, some identified continuing needs that do not necessarily support such optimistic assessments. These included funding for program implementation (30%), specialized training (20%), expert advising (18%), assistance with networking (15%), funding to strengthen their organization (12%), or general training (5%).

Table 9: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of the Small Grants Program

APPROACH V: PROVISION OF SMALL GRANTS (absent training and technical assistance)	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Open to a wider group of beneficiaries	May not contribute to organizational sustainability
Responsive to a broader range of needs	Danger of dispersing impact ³⁵
May be more responsive to real needs in society ³⁶	Lack of training and TA may limit results

³³ Priority given to CSOs engaged in conflict mitigation efforts and promoting inter-ethnic harmony.

³⁴ Directed at voter education and mobilization efforts in advance of 2002 parliamentary elections.

³⁵ As will be discussed elsewhere in this report, it is more difficult to identify major impacts of broadly directed initiatives, such as the small grants program, than more focused efforts.

Opportunity to leverage funds from other donors	May not produce long term solutions
Opportunity to expand project activities	Primarily a donor rather than partner relationship ³⁷
Provides more rapid and flexible response	No systemic/Less structural accountability
Allows for short term solutions	Danger that very short-term projects may interfere with other on going programs that target the same beneficiary group or address the same issue.
Provides for low-cost solutions	
May be easier for smaller CSOs to access funds	

General Approach to Civil Society Building

This approach has been defined in a variety of ways: (1) assistance to a large number of CSOs, (2) assistance to a geographically and sectorally diverse set of CSOs, (3) provision of basic and general training directed at groups of CSOs, or (4) the provision of training, TA, and/or grants on separate rather than integrated tracks. The first phase of DemNet, during which 70 CSOs, most of them within the environmental sub-sector, best exhibits this approach. Stakeholders deemed this type of assistance most appropriate to contexts with underdeveloped civil societies where the skill sets and experience of CSOs – many of them relatively young organizations – are limited.

Table 10: Relative Advantages and Disadvantages of General Approach

APPROACH VI: GENERAL APPROACH TO CIVIL SOCIETY BUILDING	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Appropriate response to underdeveloped sector	Emphasis is on breadth rather than depth of assistance
Helps to vet serious CSOs from others less so	Harder (more labor intensive) for ISC to manage diffuse interests of a large number of CSOs, dispersed across regions and sectors, and working on disparate activities
May address civil society sector interests	More difficult to create real partnerships
Builds basic skills within the sector upon which more substantive investments can be made in the future	May discourage CSO focus and specialization ³⁸
	May disperse results thereby limiting impact
	Increases prospects for investments in unproven CSOs that may not ultimately perform
May initially provide opportunities to small CSOs operating outside major cities	May not accommodate different skill levels or training needs (priorities) of CSOs
Provides CSOs with an opportunity to prove themselves and establish their role in society	Disjoint between training and grants may undermine results or at least fail to maximize synergies

³⁶ Specifically, an open grants program allows the CSOs to determine priorities and, as noted in the discussion of the telephone interview, the vast majority of these priorities were identified through some form of needs assessment. Closed grants programs, where the focal areas are identified by the donor, run a risk of CSOs being more donor - driven.

³⁷ CSOs that received more in-depth assistance that included grants, training (including specialized training), and technical assistance were more likely to describe their relationship with ISC as one of 'partnership.'

³⁸ In the event that there are no distinct areas of activity. In the case of Phase I, however, there was an environmental focus, which meant that during this phase, most of the CSOs assisted did have a particular specialization.

2. Encouraging Networking and Mentoring Relationships

While ISC had begun to encourage networking of CSOs beginning in Phase II, this and the creation of mentoring relationships became an increasingly important and strategic aspect of DemNet as the program evolved. ISC provided routine opportunities to CSOs to get together to discuss issues of mutual interest and prospects for cooperation. Over time, these networking meetings became increasingly open and participatory, with CSOs setting priorities and developing the agenda. According to ISC, it was the first to introduce ‘open space technology,’ a model that is now being replicated throughout Macedonia. Among the themes addressed by the meetings were coalition building and networking strategies, self-regulation through codes of conduct and standards of excellence, and managing for results. ISC provided funding for joint activities. CSOs participating in DemNet were also encouraged to provide some form of mentoring to another organization. ISC’s approach to networking, in particular, one that created the space and the time for networks to evolve naturally was repeatedly praised by participants in the program.³⁹ Certainly, the length of the program, i.e. nearly 10 years, contributed significantly to development of ‘homegrown’ networks. Among the comments offered by various stakeholders:

ISC gave us an opportunity to find our own mutual interests and develop our networks naturally.

Groups need to trust each other before they can come together and form an effective network. This takes time.

Many foreign donors are forcing networks when the NGOs themselves don’t even know if they want to join and on what basis. We have succeeded in registering a large coalition, but this was after nine months of putting our goals, interests, and capabilities on the table and finding the logical connections.

If CSOs have come to understand the need for – and the advantages of – working together and if their common interests are well defined, then the network can succeed. Networks won’t succeed if they are imposed from the outside.

Many stakeholders also attributed the use of focal areas in phase IV with providing common issues around which like-minded CSOs could more easily coalesce and for providing more of an incentive to overcome personal differences than was the case with more generalized attempts at network building.

3. The Grants Process

Many CSO representatives complimented ISC’s grant making and project management processes not just as means of securing support for their organizations but also as a tool for building their capacities. They noted that although originally intimidated by the application process and/or programmatic and financial reporting requirements, they came to appreciate the value of these stringent requirements. Among the sentiments shared by CSO representatives:

When we first saw the application, we were scared. It was hard. But by the time we had completed our first quarterly report, we weren’t so overwhelmed and we knew we could do it.

We applied at the beginning of the DemNet project. We were rejected several times. But, the grant criteria were well established and eventually we were able to qualify for funding.

³⁹ The longevity of the program, nearly 10 years, was credited with providing time to build trust and subsequently more viable relationships between organizations.

We are glad that ISC insists upon quality. This is clear from their application. It is a challenge to apply. When we were selected, this increased our self-confidence.

In terms of the grant selection panelists, they also had a positive impression of the rigors of the grants process. They considered the application format to be very useful with lots of baseline information. According to one panelist: “It is one of the best I have seen compared to other donors. I refer to this when preparing materials for grants by my own organization.” The comments form was also deemed to be useful in facilitating decision-making among the panelists. At the same time, panelists observed that it was very demanding to review such lengthy applications (most panelists hadn’t fully reviewed all the applications before arriving at the review panel meeting), complete the quantitative ratings, and prepare written justifications, as was required in latter stages. One panelist suggested that the ratings part not be so detailed. She recommended the use of a more simple grading system since “so much depends upon the discussion among the panelists.” Another panelist agreed, “The last phase of DemNet was too complicated and demanding. We had to justify every rating in writing. When you multiply that by the total number of grantees, it was too much work, especially if you were serving on more than one panel. Of course, this better enabled ISC to justify their decisions to grant or refuse funding.” Finally, the panelists had different experiences with respect to follow-up. Some received no follow-on information, e.g. when the grant agreements were signed, for how much, how the CSOs performed, or what was the outcome of the project. Others did receive this information, either because they asked for it or because the responsible program coordinator took the initiative to provide it. All agreed that it would be useful to know such things as many of their own organizations work with the same CSOs and on some of the same issues. In general, ISC’s grant-making process enjoyed a reputation of transparency and genuine competitiveness among the CSO and donor representatives interviewed.

B. DemNet Outcomes and Impacts

This section of the report considers the outcomes and impacts of the DemNet program, particularly the last two phases, from the perspective of CSO sustainability, civil society development, impact on ordinary citizens and communities, and societal change. This discussion begins with evidence of increased skills and capacities and moves on to tangible results within society, although text boxes featuring partner success stories are presented throughout the entirety of the section. All featured success stories exhibit results across a number of variables.

1. Partner CSO Sustainability

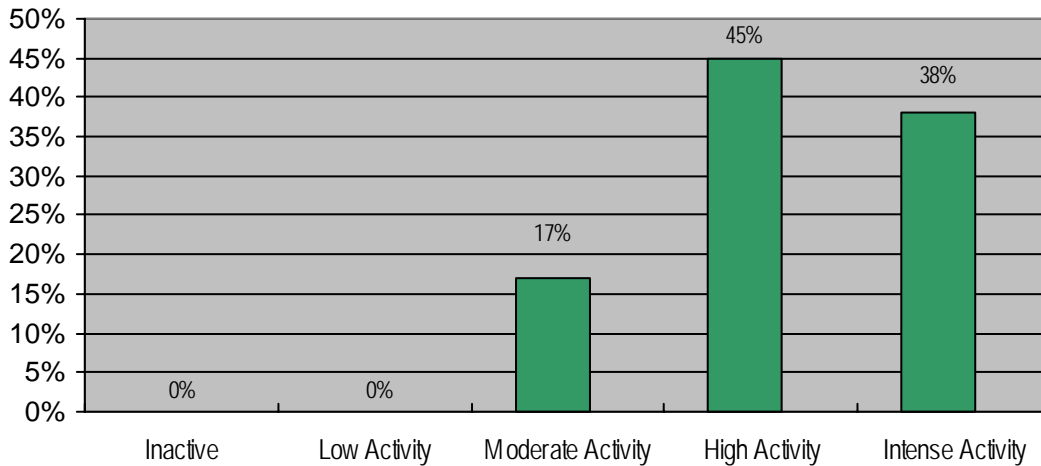
Level of Activity

CSO respondents interviewed for this evaluation appeared to be quite active. As the table below shows, 83% of CSO respondents described their levels of activity as either high or intense.⁴⁰ Of these, 65% of CSO respondents credit their participation in the DemNet program with greatly improving their level of activity. Another 35% say that their participation in the program slightly improved their level of activity.

⁴⁰ High activity was defined as: Routine meetings of members or supporters. On-going activities, events, and/or service provision. Routine interaction with community and with government, business, and or media at the local level. Ability to mobilize a reliable cadre of volunteers. Intense activity was defined as: regular meetings of members or supports. Multiple projects on-going. Frequent interaction with community and with government, business, and/or media at the local and/or national levels. Extensive cadre of volunteers available to the CSO. For purposes of consistency, definitions were borrowed from the last DemNet evaluation.

Chart 1: CSO Levels of Activity

NOTE: Percentage of CSOs describing their level of activity as inactive, low, moderate, high, or intense.



When asked what distinguished their CSOs from the thousands of other NGOs registered in Macedonia, the vast majority of which are believed to be inactive, participants in the focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews tended to explain this in terms of their commitment to mission and to their beneficiaries as well as a great deal of hard work.

SUCCESS STORY 1:

Association of Clubs of Reformed Alcoholics More Than Doubles Its Beneficiaries

In Macedonia, there are an estimated 30,000 alcoholics of which only about 400 receive treatment in a given year. Data collected from spouses of recovering alcoholics also shows that 95% have been victims of physical abuse. With support from ISC, the Association of Clubs of Reformed Alcoholics, which cooperates with the Center for Alcoholism at the Psychiatric Hospital, established Macedonia's first hotline for victims of abuse by alcoholics. In addition to the hotline, the CSO offered a wide range of services including individual and group counseling services, educational workshops, re-socialization activities including creative activities and cultural outings, and home visits by emergency teams to hundreds of victims and their husbands. During the project, the number of beneficiaries grew 2.5 times. The number of calls, which were soon coming from all corners of Macedonia, ballooned from 187 to 512 in the course of six months. According to the CSOs President, "The project has grown so quickly, in terms of interest levels, that we have outgrown our office space!" During the same timeframe, the Association was able to get 42 men into treatment programs. The project has had a profound impact on the confidence levels of the women beneficiaries. Some women who had suffered silently for years and lived in fear of the stigmas associated with alcoholism and domestic violence are now public advocates. In addition to the provision of services, the Association of Clubs of Reformed Alcoholics has been instrumental in lobbying for the passage of legislation addressing violence against women, which was passed by Parliament in March 2004.

Organizational Viability and Management Capacity

With respect to issues relating to organizational and management issues, the team routinely heard statements about the value of training and technical assistance on such issues as strategic planning, budgeting, financial management, proposal writing, and fundraising. These sentiments were borne out by the responses to the CSO survey which found that a significant percentage of CSOs credit their participation in the DemNet program with either 'somewhat' or 'greatly' improving their skills and capacity in the following areas:

- Strategic planning (90% of CSO respondents)
- Project implementation (87%)
- Project management (87%)
- Proposal writing (86%)
- Priority-setting (83%)
- Organizational management (76%)
- Project design (72%)
- Fundraising (72%)
- Financial management (72%)

In response to a range of organizational and management issues, the survey found that between 25% and 45% of CSO respondents said that they did not have a volunteer program, written policies and procedures, a written strategic plan, a fundraising strategy, a media plan, a public outreach strategy, accounting and financial management systems, periodic financial reporting, or in-house training capabilities before DemNet, but **instituted these tools as a result of their participation in the program**. With respect to financial management and reporting, the ISC finance director in Macedonia confirmed that the quality of these had improved significantly over the course of the project. According to her, "CSOs established financial procedures consistent with our advice. They have definitely applied their skills." Based on its findings – and contrary to the conclusion of the previous evaluation – this team believes that the skills acquired by CSOs during DemNet training are being applied both to organizational development and to project implementation.⁴¹ For more information on the impact of the DemNet program on the growth of skills and the introduction of systems to improve organizational capacity, please see Appendix 7, questions no. 24 and 27.

When asked to rate their own capabilities, the highest percentage of CSOs identified their skills as 'strong' or 'very strong' in the following areas:

- Project implementation (93% of CSO respondents)
- Proposal writing (90%)
- Achieving tangible results (86%)

⁴¹ According to the Cook report for DAI, 'sustainability training is ineffective' and 'application of DemNet training is weak.' Multiple stakeholders participating in the current evaluation took issue with whether these findings were appropriate at the time. This assessment wonders whether there was a problem with the training, per se, or the 'hands off' management approach that was more characteristic of the earlier phases of DemNet, i.e. improved oversight combined with on-going technical assistance might have provided for improved application of skills.

- Project design (83%)
- Project management (80%)

With respect to the third bullet point, numerous stakeholders spoke of the value of increased emphasis on monitoring and evaluation in the last phase of DemNet and a shift in focus from a process orientation to managing for results. According to one CSO representative:

We learned how to become more results oriented. Today, we don't get involved in projects if we don't think we can achieve results.

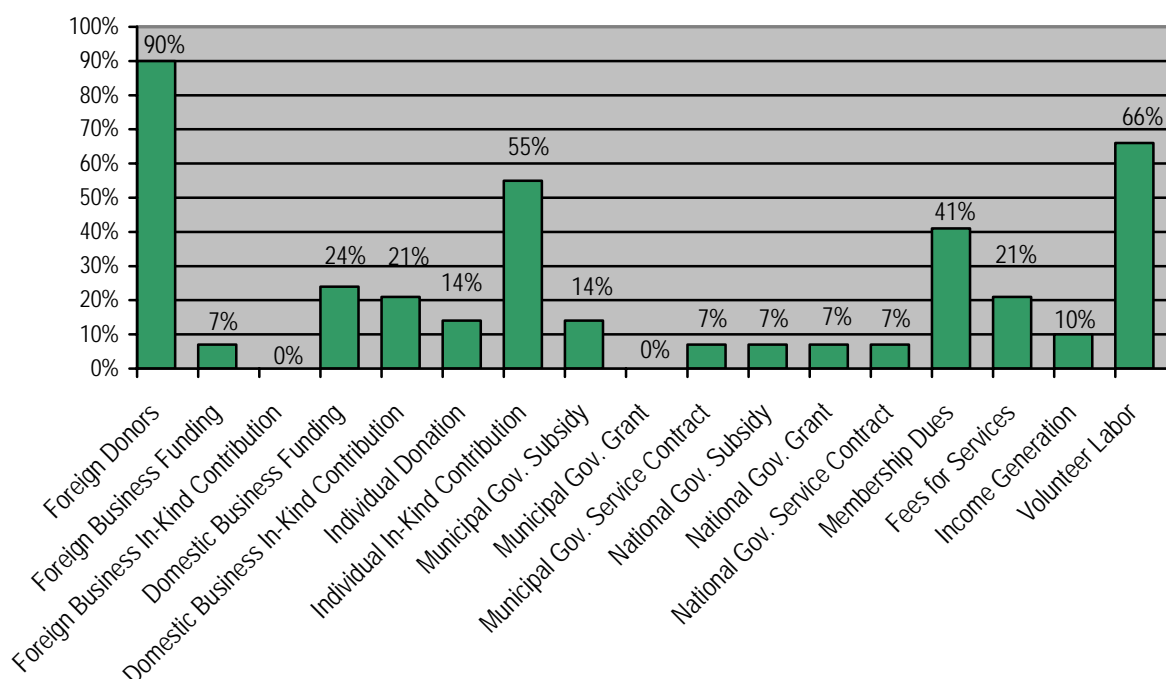
For greater detail on the self-assessment of CSOs surveyed, refer to question no. 26 in Appendix 7.

At the same time, there remains a need to further build and refine skills as CSOs mature and as they are held to an increasingly higher expectations of performance. Several representatives of the EU, for example, indicated that the vast majority of proposals and budgets it receives from Macedonian CSOs, including DemNet partners, do not meet its strict technical requirements for funding. Of those who do receive grants, the quality of financial reporting as well as compliance with EU regulatory and contractual requirements remains inadequate.

Funding Diversification and Financial Sustainability

During the past four years, CSOs participating in DemNet program appear to have increased their prospects for financial sustainability. As the table below illustrates, CSO respondents are most likely to generate resources through support from foreign donors, in-kind contributions from individuals, membership dues, or volunteer labor.

Chart 2: Percentage of CSOs Receiving Support From Various Sources



With respect to grants from foreign donors, the levels have increased dramatically, with only 3% of CSO respondents indicating that they received such grants in the past and 90% saying that they currently have such grants. Specifically:

- 41% of CSO respondents report that they have received funding from more than five foreign donors during the past four years.
- 38% of CSOs respondents say they have received funding from between three and five foreign donors in the past four years.
- 14% of CSO respondents indicated that they had received funding from at least two sources in the past four years, while only 7% had only one foreign donor during that time.
- CSOs outside of Skopje (92%) appeared just as likely to be able to access foreign donor funds as CSOs based in Skopje (88%).
- In terms of focal areas, CSOs working on conflict management were most likely to have foreign donors funding (100% of conflict management CSOs), followed by human trafficking and gender (90%), youth (88%), and HIV/AIDs (75%).

The CSOs interviewed also noted that the financial assistance they received from the DemNet program allowed them to leverage other funds. Specifically, 72% of CSO respondents to the written survey and 80% of the small grantees participating in the telephone survey as well as most of the LEAP and CAP communities said they were able to leverage funds once they had received DemNet funding.

Despite this diversification of funding sources, these CSOs remain highly dependent upon foreign donors to support both their organization and its activities:

- 10% of CSO respondents report that up to 100% of their overall funding comes from foreign donors.
- 35% of CSO respondents say that up to 90% of their overall funding comes from foreign donors.
- 38% of CSO respondents say that up to 75% of their overall funding comes from foreign donors.

Only 14% of CSOs report that they are operating with no funding from foreign donors.

A cross-tabulation of data collected from the written survey reveals the following characteristics with respect to domestic funding sources:

- CSOs located outside of Skopje appeared to have a better track record of securing financial contributions from domestic businesses compared with those in Skopje. CSOs both in Skopje and beyond have relatively greater (and comparable) success in obtaining in-kind contributions from domestic businesses. Youth oriented CSOs were the most likely to get either a financial contribution or an in-kind contribution from a domestic business.
- CSOs based in Skopje had a considerably better track record in soliciting financial contributions from individuals when compared with CSOs outside of Skopje. CSOs located in and outside Skopje were near equally able to get in-kind contributions from individuals. CSOs working in the area of conflict management had the greatest success in obtaining financial and in-kind assistance from individuals.
- Only CSOs outside Skopje reported getting a financial subsidy from local government. No CSOs either in or outside Skopje received project grants from local governments, and very few received

a service contract from local government, regardless of their base of activity. Conflict management CSOs were the most likely to receive a financial subsidy from local government.

- Very few CSOs received a financial subsidy from the national government. Conflict management CSOs were most likely to get funding from the national government either in the form of a financial subsidy or project grant, while CSOs working in HIV/AIDs were most likely to secure a service contract.

Several CSOs with which the team met had pursued various methods for raising some kind of revenue or in-kind support from domestic sources to support organizational costs. Perhaps one of the most creative is the environmental CSO, Biosphera, which managed to change public attitudes and behaviors toward recycling while bringing in cash:

SUCCESS STORY 2:

Biosphera Changes Public Attitudes and Behavior toward Recycling While Bringing in Cash

Biosphera was established in 1999 to educate and involve citizens about recycling. With funding from ISC during DemNet III, it sought to address the major problem of solid waste in Bitola, an unwelcome by-product of the socio-economic transition. Local government in the city was unable to keep pace with demand and municipal recycling. Its strategy was based on the LEAP methodology. As very little research existed at the start of the program, Biosphera studied behavior of residents in the production of waste and their disposal habits. This was followed by a media campaign (TV and radio) announcing intentions of the project, followed by door-to-door visits. Citizens were informed about the opportunity to collect and sell solid waste paper to a recycling company in Bitola. Then, 20 bins were placed in five large residential buildings as test sites. Residents did change their solid waste habits. Bins were regularly and quickly filled as income was generated. To test residents' commitment to recycling, the bins were temporarily removed and replaced with signs that contained only Biosphera's phone number. The CSO was quickly inundated with phone calls by incredulous callers. Soon after, the bins were returned. This activity continues even now, although ISC support for the project ended in 2001, and despite some hurdles, such as the closure of the Bitola recycling plant. Another 'buyer' was located in Skopje. Due to the existence of a 'buyer,' the activity paid for itself, and actually turned a profit. Another result is that a public utility company in Bitola is now also collecting recycled paper to sell to the Skopje plant, thereby extending the reach of the program beyond the original 5 residential buildings. The success of this project transformed Biosphera from an informal group of idealists to a serious organization with a positive public image. As Biosphera's leader is proud to point out, "At first the community did not take us seriously. Today we are recognized not only in our town, but internationally" (a reference the CSO's participation in 5th Ministerial Conference for the Environment in Europe). The CSO continues to work toward a national policy for solid waste management and helps the local government establish its environmental priorities.

Other innovators include the following:

- Several CSOs have been able to obtain free or discounted rent for office space, for example: The CSO Biosphera (see more in the text box above) has secured free office space for 10 years from an individual benefactor. The Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency has received support from both the local government and local businesses in Kavadarci to cover its office rent for the next three years. And, four of the multi-disciplinary teams established by the CSO, For Happy

Childhood, are being provided with office space by branches of the Centers for Social Work and Policy.

- Also in Kavadarci, there is a referendum every few years on a two percent (2%) donation by citizens of their income to support CSO projects in the community. The referendum is posed every few years to ensure continuing support, which – thus far – has been forthcoming.
- One CSO generates income by offering courses for a fee, selling a newspaper, doing translations and design work, and sponsoring some sporting events. These activities help to support the organization's nine paid employees.
- The CSO Felix raised 60,000 MKD (1,300 USD) through a silent auction which also generated considerable press 'buzz' and public interest.
- In Sveti Nikola, the Citizens' Group organized the municipality's first auction to raise funds for LEAP implementation and local charities, netting approximately \$1,000.

Despite positive trends in terms of funding diversification, this has yet to translate into organizational longevity among most – if not all – of the CSOs interviewed:

- Only 3% of CSO respondents estimate they currently have the resources to sustain themselves for five years or more.
- 24% of CSO respondents estimate they currently have the resources to sustain themselves for three to four years.
- 24% of CSO respondents estimate they currently have the resources to sustain themselves for one to two years.
- Another 24% of CSO respondents do not believe they currently have the resources to survive a year.

These findings are not particularly surprising given the poor economic conditions that have prevailed for some time in Macedonia combined with a regressive tax policy for non-profits, a lack of tax incentives for corporate philanthropy, and limited public funding for CSOs, particularly with respect to social contracting. This data illustrates the continuing uphill battle to be faced by CSOs as they strive to sustain their engagement in society in the years to come. Nonetheless, CSO respondents believe that, through the DemNet program, they have been able to build the skills necessary to improve the financial viability of their CSOs. Specifically, 62% credit their participation in the DemNet program with 'greatly improving' their financial viability, while another 25% say it has 'slightly improved.'

Networking among CSOs

The evaluation team found healthy attitudes toward networking between CSOs and practical evidence to demonstrate that these attitudes are being translated into actions. This represents a significant achievement in comparison to five years ago. Attitudes among this sub-set of DemNet partners also appear to be more positive than the broader set of CSOs that participated in the civil society assessment conducted in mid-2003.⁴²

⁴² According to the report prepared by Harry Blair et al. on behalf of DAI for USAID, views about coalition building and networking were considerably more mixed than what the current evaluation team found during its focus group discussions and individual interviews.

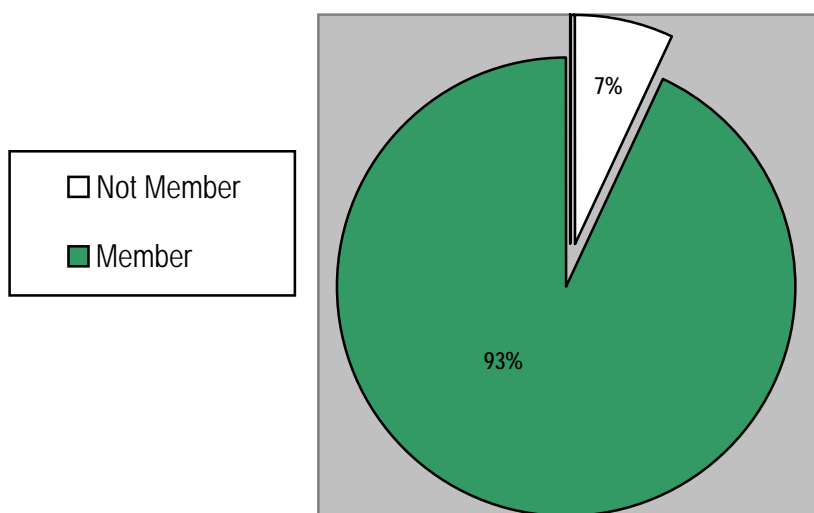
CSOs were asked whether or not they agreed with a series of statements pertaining to the relative value of working through networks or coalitions. Among the responses:

- 79% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'working in coalitions helps CSOs to leverage their human and financial resources and assets.'
- 86% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'working in coalitions allows CSOs to achieve greater results than working separately.'
- 100% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'working in coalitions provides a valuable opportunity for information sharing.'
- 100% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'working in coalitions allows CSOs to extend their reach and impact beyond their immediate communities.'
- 93% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'working in coalitions provides a valuable opportunity to transfer and learn skills.'
- 69% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'government and other official bodies are more responsive to a coalition than to an individual CSO.'
- 80% of CSO respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, 'gaining media coverage is easier for a coalition than for an individual CSO.'

While CSOs were more inclined to agree with positive statements about working through networks and coalitions, they were also more inclined to disagree with negative statements about the same. For more information, please see Appendix 7, question no. 16.

Of the CSOs completing the written survey, the vast majority report being members of at least one issue or sector-based network or coalition. Among the domestic networks and coalitions that respondents cited: Union of Women of Macedonia, NGO Parliament, "All for Fair Trails," "It's Enough," SEGA, "Now," "Antiko," Balkan Bridge, Anti-Trafficking Network, "Resist, Say No," Macedonian Women's Lobby, Coalition for the Prevention of HIV/AIDs, "Negotino," Harm Reduction Network, "Kids of the Street," ECMI, Art for Social Change, "Objection for Peace," "Students for Themselves," Children's Rights Coalition, "Matusiteb," Western Balkan Youth, Students' Democratic Initiatives, Citizens' Association of Macedonia (GAMA), and the Macedonian Interethnic Association (MIA). CSO respondents also listed a number of regional and international networks of which they were a part.

Chart 3: Membership In Coalition or Network



Beyond the existence of formal coalitions and networks, informal connections between CSOs also appear to be improving:

- 52% of CSOs describe their relationships with other CSOs in their community as 'very good,' following DemNet assistance, **more than double** the percentage before DemNet assistance.
- 45% of CSOs characterize their relationships with other CSOs in nearby communities as 'very good' following DemNet assistance, **more than double** the percentage before DemNet assistance.
- 55% of CSOs say that their relationships with other CSOs operating in the same field are 'very good' following DemNet assistance, up from 20% before DemNet assistance.
- 48% of CSOs describe their relationships with other CSOs throughout the country as 'very good' following DemNet assistance, **double** the percentage before DemNet assistance.

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of CSO respondents said they were more likely to join a network or coalition as a result of their participation in the DemNet program. And, on several occasions, CSO stakeholders also spoke of the possibility of pursuing merger strategies with other like-minded organizations as a means of better ensuring the continuation of their activities in light of reduced funding by foreign donors. Evidence of knowledge transfer through networks as well as mentoring relationships will be discussed in greater detail on page 35.

SUCCESS STORY 3: **SEGA Coalition Assumes Leading Role in Formulating Youth Policy**

DemNet partner, the Youth Council - Prilep conducted a needs assessment of youth issues in Macedonia, establishing baseline data on this important sub-sector. The CSO had been working informally with other CSOs to formulate recommendations on a national youth policy. With support from ISC, it held a Youth Forum in Ohrid, at which 70 CSOs discussed proposals. Over the course of nine months, the Youth Council Prilep and 29 other CSOs began to coalesce into a formal network, SEGA, which continued to refine a series of recommendations in cooperation with the Agency for Youth and Sports. The coalition has two seats on the Agency's Working Group. It also hosted a series of public debates on youth policy in 15 towns. According to the Head of the Agency, SEGA's role in organizing these local forums provided for much broader input than would otherwise have been the case. "We don't have the capacity to do everything, he said, we need NGOs to provide support and fill in the gaps." During an interview with this evaluation team, he could not say enough about the quality and value of his Agency's cooperation with SEGA. A draft of the National Youth Strategy, which incorporates 90% of the recommendations forwarded by SEGA, has been submitted to Parliament and awaits review (as of November 2004). In another recent development, SEGA was officially registered as a coalition by the Ministry of Justice. As a sign of the level of cohesion that has been achieved within the coalition, at the November meeting of the SEE Regional Youth Policy Conference, the Macedonian representatives introduced themselves exclusively as SEGA coalition representatives, rather than as members of individual CSOs.

Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

Cooperation with Government Institutions

Unlike the findings of the 2001 DemNet evaluation, this team found that improving attitudes among DemNet CSOs toward cooperation with government institutions. This team was also able to find tangible evidence of such relationships and their outcomes.⁴³ Certainly, different CSOs had different experiences, but momentum appeared to be in the positive direction. As part of the written survey of 29 DemNet CSOs, respondents were asked to rate the quality of their relationships with various government institutions before and after their participation in the program.⁴⁴ Data collected from the written survey found positive trends in terms of relationships with mayors as evidenced in the following table:

⁴³ According to the previous evaluation, "DemNet training apparently was unsuccessful in allaying the chronic distrust of government held by many NGOs. Conversations with NGOs during site visits revealed a knee-jerk negativity towards working with local governments . . . NGOs were markedly unenthusiastic about attempting to work beyond this mindset" (p. 29). For more information see *Evaluation of the Macedonia DemNet Program*, report dated February 2002, by Thomas J. Cook and Mihajlo Popovski for DAI.

⁴⁴ It is important to emphasize that the data presented in the stakeholder relationship tables does not represent baseline and tracking data, but rather a one-time assessment of the status of relationships both currently and in the past.

Table 11: CSO Respondent Relationships with Mayors

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND MAYOR			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	5 CSOs [17% of respondents]	7 CSOs [24% of respondents]	↑ 7%
Good	5 CSOs [17%]	9 CSOs [31%]	↑14%
Fair	3 CSOs [10%]	3 CSOs [10%]	-
Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓14%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 4%
No Relationship/ Ans.	6 CSOs [21%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓11%

The perceived quality of relationships with municipal councils also showed positive trends with a 25% increase in the number of CSOs that described their relationship with municipal councils as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ as a result of participation in the DemNet program. For more information, please refer to Appendix 8.

SUCCESS STORY 4:

Nijazi Bej Works with Government and Business to Revive Tourism and Address Unemployment

Before the breakup of Yugoslavia, the Prespa region hosted over 200,000 visitors per year. As a result of regional turmoil, economic stagnation, and a drought that caused the level of the Prespa Lake to fall by 10 meters, tourism in the region dropped off precipitously. With very few resources, DemNet partner Nijazi Bej, pursued creative strategies and partnerships to address the drop in tourism and its negative economic consequences. It lobbied the mayor and municipal council to do more to revive tourism and provide for the protection of Prespa Lake and its shorelines. The CSO established a center to train unemployed youth and offered courses on alternative forms of tourism. To pursue more comprehensive development of tourism in the region, Nijazi Bej formed a coalition with 14 other CSOs and reached out to CSOs working on similar initiatives on the Albanian side of the lake and in Greece. It established formal cooperation with 20 tourist agencies and eight hotels. The CSO produced a promotional CD, which it distributed to those in the tourist industry and service sector as well as to international organizations. The Ministry of Culture awarded the CSO six small grants to strengthen pride in the region and to preserve its cultural heritage. As a result of its efforts, and those of its many partners, Nijazi Bej succeeded in securing rights from the municipality to maintain a section of the shoreline, introducing five new tours, establishing a boat line through contracts with 14 boat owners, attracting 1,000 paying tourists, generating 206 overnight stays in homes used as B&Bs, generating several permanent or seasonal employment opportunities through the tours, and supporting local artisans who created 600 hand-made souvenirs. While tourism is still far from the levels of a decade ago, the results that Nijazi Bej achieved in one tourist season are impressive. Next year, it is projecting a 300% increase in the number of visitors to Prespa.

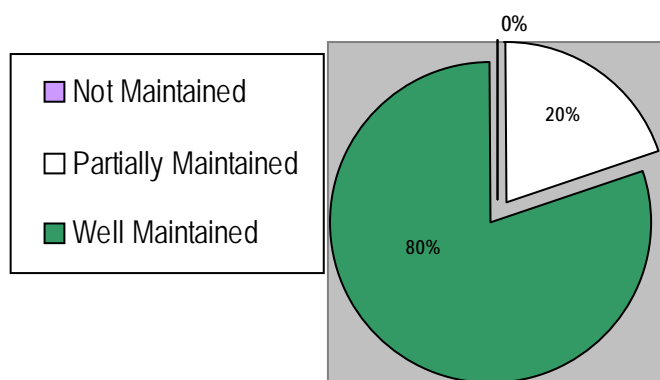
With respect to the CSOs that have led LEAP or CAP projects in their communities, there are also some encouraging trends relative to previous realities:

- 40% of CSO respondents indicate that the local government is somewhat more inclined to view them as a partner in development as a result of their role leading a LEAP or CAP processes.
- 10% say their local government absolutely treats them as a partner in development.

- Another 50%, however, report that there has been no change in their relationship with local governments.

When asked if they continued to maintain their partnerships with local government (and business) despite the cessation of DemNet funding to most of these communities, 100% of the lead CSOs surveyed said yes. Of these, 80% said the partnerships were 'well-maintained'.

Chart 4: Status of Multi-Sectoral Partnerships
In LEAP and CAP Communities



Focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews also revealed that DemNet CSOs are generally quite optimistic about future cooperation with local government in light of recent steps to decentralize power in Macedonia. Many interviewees see the future of their CSOs – both in terms of community activities and organizational viability – as closely linked to increasing authority and capacity of local government institutions.

SUCCESS STORY 5:

Labunishta Citizen's Group (LEAP) Improves the Quality and Quantity of Water Supply with Cooperation from the Local Government

Through participatory processes begun in the first phase of DemNet, the Citizens' Group in Labunishta established four priorities in its local environmental plan, which was adopted by the Municipal Council in 1998. Implementation of the priorities began in 2000 with the community contributing a significant level of financial support (for the sewage construction project) and volunteer labor. Once the LEAP Implementation Committee was in place, a number of working groups were established to manage the preparation and execution of the implementation plans. With the full backing of the mayor and municipal council of Pechevo, work began with a two-part project to improve the quality and quantity of drinking water by replacing existing pipes, which were reportedly contaminated with asbestos, that transport potable water and by replacing the sewage system. The community also received support from the Community Self-Help Initiative (CSHI) to build an additional water plant for the municipality. ISC also provided funding for the installation of new pipes to divert water into a second source so that the water level in the basin could be kept sufficiently high. By the end of the third phase of DemNet, Labunishta had succeeded – with a single-minded commitment – in addressing a complex set of water related issues. As a result of the initiative, local citizens have secured an abundant and safe water supply.

Trends also suggest that relations are improving at the national level, particularly with respect to government ministries.

Table 12: CSO Respondent Relationships with the Government⁴⁵

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	2 CSOs [7% of respondents]	9 CSOs [31% of respondents]	↑24%
Good	6 CSOs [21%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↓4%
Fair	2 CSOs [7%]	7 CSOs [24%]	↑17%
Poor	6 CSOs [21%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓11%
Very Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓21%
No Relationship/Ans.	6 [21%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓7%

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ministry of Education and Science were most frequently cited as CSO partners followed by the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, as well as the Agency for Youth and Sports and national commissions on HIV/AIDs and anti-trafficking were also cited on multiple occasions. While the data suggests that relations with government institutions are improving, there is no evidence of constructive cooperation with political parties, an important conduit to elected officials.⁴⁶

SUCCESS STORY 6:

Hera and Hops Provide Leadership on Several Fronts in the Fight Against HIV/AIDs

With significant support from the US Embassy and ISC, HERA and HOPs contributed to the development of the National Strategy on HIV/AIDs, which was formally adopted on 1 December 2003, International Day for Combating HIV/AIDs. In cooperation with two other DemNet CSOs, Doverba and Izbor/MIA and through their participation on the National (Multi-Sectoral) Commission on HIV/AIDs, HERA and HOPs played a leading role in the development of Macedonia's successful submission of an \$6.3 million grant proposal to the Global Fund on HIV/AIDs, which was formally approved in September 2004. Today, HERA holds a formal seat on the five-person Project Implementation Unit established by the Ministry of Health, the primary recipient of the grant, to develop the implementation plan and necessary protocols. This is a much-envied development, as other CSOs strive to secure a permanent 'seat at the table' on other Government working groups. HERA also coordinates activities within the UN Technical Working Group on HIV/AIDs. As 60% of the funds in the grant proposal were earmarked for NGOs, HERA and HOPS as well as their CSO partners are well positioned to become major service providers in the near future. Already these groups are recognized for their leadership in service provision. HERA established counseling services and a hotline, which fielded 160 calls during the course of its DemNet funded project. HOPS provides medical treatment, counseling sessions and advising, drop-in services, and social support groups. It is working to expand a network of support centers throughout Macedonia. With help from ISC, HOPS has expanded its level of service provision by 20%, offering thousands of services to nearly 500 beneficiaries. Working on the drug abuse side of the HIV/AIDs equation, Doverba also established a hotline (368 calls) and counseling services (284 visitors) and offered educational workshops (642 participants) to drug addicts and their families. Izbor sensitized 122 local government representatives and medical workers in Strumica on HIV/AIDs issues and trained peer educators to work within the Roma community. It is through the coordinated and dedicated efforts of these CSOs that such significant strides have been made in a relatively short period of time.

The evaluation team was somewhat surprised, however, that the data did not indicate greater gains with respect to the Parliament of Macedonia, as many CSOs have worked with members of parliament and with

⁴⁵ For more information on various CSO-government partnerships, please see Appendix 8, question no. 11.

⁴⁶ For more on this, see Appendix 8.

various parliamentary committees and working groups. This may be due, in part, to the pre-eminent role of the executive branch in spearheading the introduction of new legislation or amendments to existing laws. Nonetheless, the number of CSOs indicating that they have no relationship with the parliament has declined significantly. For more information, see Appendix 8.

Success Story 7:

For Happy Childhood Creates Multi-disciplinary Teams to Combat Human Trafficking

With support from ISC, For Happy Childhood, established cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary teams in eight towns throughout Macedonia. The teams, comprised of police, psychologists, lawyers, judges, and CSO representatives conduct fieldwork in their areas of responsibility and provide support services to victims/suspected victims of human trafficking. The CSO works closely with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and the Centers for Social Work and Policy, which is covering the costs of office rent for four of the teams. Maintaining offices is extremely important to the teams, as it helps victims avoid the stigma of going to the police station. All eight teams are still active even though ISC funding for the project has ended. For Happy Childhood also operates its own counseling center, which served 91 clients during the course of the project, and a hotline which is now fielding calls not only from victims, but also concerned citizens who want to report suspicious activities. It has referred several cases of children being trafficked to the Centers for Social Work and Policy which will assume responsibility for protection measures. One of the unexpected outcomes of the CSO's work has been the level of cooperation received from the ministries of justice and interior as well as local police departments. As a result of its efforts – and those of others working on anti-trafficking – the patterns of trafficking are changing in Macedonia. Hotels are no longer being used as transit points. Instead, traffickers have begun using private apartments. While this is an indicator of the group's impact, it also presents them with new difficulties.

Cooperation With the Business Sector

While the CSOs surveyed have shown improved relations with the business sector, this remains relatively underdeveloped, as illustrated in the table below:

Table 13: CSO Respondent Relationships with the Business Community

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOS AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	1 CSO [3% of respondents]	3 CSOs [10% of respondents]	↑ 7%
Good	2 CSOs [7%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 7%
Fair	3 CSOs [10%]	6 CSOs [21%]	↑11%
Poor	10 CSOs [35%]	9 CSOs [31%]	↓ 4%
Very Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓ 7%
No Relationship/ Ans.	9 CSOs [31%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↓14%

Nonetheless, several CSOs have proven quite effective at establishing partnerships with business in order to advance their mission:

- Felix convinced three local businesses to sponsor a local Roma girl's education through the highest levels to which she aspired.

- Open Gate was able to get the Macedonian Telecommunications Company to donate a phone line for its hotline.
- MATA undertook a needs assessment of local businesses in Kicevo as a means of better helping job seekers, mostly unemployed youth, develop appropriate skills and matching them to existing opportunities.

Youth oriented CSOs working on employment issues, such as GAMA (see Success Story 10), MATA (above), and Nijazi Bej (see Success Story 4), have also been particularly effective in this regard.

Public Outreach and Media Relations

CSO respondents reported improving relations both with ordinary citizens and media outlets. The number of CSO respondents indicating that they had a 'very good' relationship with ordinary citizens increased by 28%, **double the level before DemNet Assistance**, as shown in the table below:

Table 14: CSO Respondent Relationships with Ordinary Citizens

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOS AND ORDINARY CITIZENS			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	8 CSOs [28% of respondents]	16 CSOs [55% of respondents]	↑28%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	8 [28%]	↑ 4%
Fair	9 [31%]	5 [17%]	↓14%
Poor	4 [14%]	None	↓14%
Very Poor	None	None	-
No Relationship/Ans.	1 [3%]	None	↓ 3%

According to CSO respondents, 55% have been able to improve their citizen and community outreach over previous levels as a result of their participation in the DemNet program.

As for media relations, there were also positive trends with **nearly triple the number of CSOs saying they have a 'very good' relationship with local media as a result of the DemNet program.**

Table 15: CSO Respondent Relationships with Local Media

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOS AND LOCAL MASS MEDIA			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	6 CSOs [20% of respondents]	16 CSOs [55%]	↑35%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑ 4%
Fair	10 CSOs [35%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓28%
Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓ 3%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓ 3%
No Relationship/Ans.	None	None	-

Also of interest:

- CSOs based in Skopje were only slightly more likely than those outside the capital to describe their relationship with local mass media as 'very good.'
- CSOs working in the area of gender and human trafficking were most likely to describe their relations with local media as 'very good,' while youth oriented CSOs were most likely to say they were 'good,' and CSOs working in HIV/ AIDs were most likely to characterize them as 'average.'

- With respect to the CSOs that have led LEAP or CAP processes in their communities, 100% reported working with local mass media to publicize the approval of their environmental or community action plans. Of these, 70% indicated that they provided actual copies of the plan to local media outlets.

Relations with national media are also improving, with double the number of CSO respondents characterizing their current relationship with national media outlets as ‘very good’ as compared to the situation before their participation in DemNet, although this remains considerably below the same indicator for local mass media.⁴⁷ Cross tabulation of survey data revealed the following:

- Skopje based CSO respondents were significantly more likely to rate their relationship with national media as ‘very good,’ while CSOs based outside Skopje were more likely to describe them as ‘poor.’
- Youth oriented CSOs were most likely to characterize their relationship with national media outlets as ‘very good,’ while those engaged in gender programming and anti-trafficking were most likely to rate them as ‘good,’ conflict management CSOs were most likely to describe them as ‘average,’ and CSOs working on HIV/AIDs were most likely to say they were ‘poor’ or ‘very poor.’

Eighty six percent (86%) of CSO respondents credit participation in DemNet with somewhat or greatly improving their communication and PR skills, while another 80% say they have been able to somewhat or greatly improve their interaction with the media as a result of the program.

SUCCESS STORY 8:

Number of Calls to SOS Hotline Doubles Following Media Campaign

The CSO ‘Open Gate’ coordinates a network of 10 CSOs, which extends public awareness and prevention of anti-trafficking prevention throughout Macedonia. Open Gate works closely with the ministries of interior, justice, and labor and social policy and has been instrumental in the establishment of a National Secretariat on Anti-Trafficking. The CSO is working with the Secretariat to improve implementation of anti-trafficking policies through the development of a national action plan. In addition to these activities, Open Gate operates a shelter for victims of trafficking and an SOS hotline. In early 2004, another DemNet partner, Babylon, carried out a public information campaign through electronic and print media to heighten public awareness of the problem of human trafficking. In all of its materials, Babylon included the number of the SOS hotline. By the middle of the campaign, the number of calls to the SOS line more than doubled. According to research undertaken by Babylon, 73% of respondents had seen the television spot. Seventy percent (70%) reported learning about methods of recruitment and 60% about the consequences of human trafficking. While the number of calls to the SOS line has leveled off, Open Gate continues to receive a higher volume of calls than before Babylon’s public information campaign.

⁴⁷ For more information, please see Appendix 8.

Advocacy and Watchdog Capacity

According to the written survey, 59% of CSO respondents indicate that they have carried out advocacy at the national level, while another 35% have conducted advocacy at the municipal level. Data indicate that CSO confidence levels are on the rise.

- 52% of CSO respondents describe themselves as 'very confident' in approaching national government representatives and offering recommendations on specific issues or policies. Another 31% say that they are 'somewhat confident.' CSOs based outside of Skopje were more likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' in approaching national government representatives.⁴⁸ CSOs working on HIV/AIDs were the most likely to exhibit the highest confidence levels, followed by those working in the areas of gender/anti-trafficking and youth. Conflict management CSOs were significantly less likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' although a majority was 'somewhat confident.'
- 76% of CSO respondents indicate that they feel 'very confident' in approaching municipal government representatives and making recommendations on specific issues or policies. Another 17% say they are 'somewhat' confident in doing so. CSOs outside of Skopje were more likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' in approaching municipal government. There were no large discrepancies in the highest confidence indicator between CSOs representing different focal areas.
- As for the CSOs that have led LEAP or CAP processes in their communities, 40% of respondents say that feel 'significantly more confident' in approaching municipal government to advise or advocate on issues of importance to the community. Sixty percent (60%) indicate they feel 'somewhat more confident.'

Upwards of 89% of CSO respondents credit their participation in DemNet with helping them to become more effective in advocacy and lobbying. Survey respondents repeatedly identified two DemNet partners, ESE and Megashi, as leaders in advocacy. With respect to watchdog activities, 79% of CSO respondents say their participation in the program has improved their capabilities.⁴⁹ For more information on CSO activities in this area, as well as their outcome, please see page 38.

Service Provision Capacity

During focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews, the evaluation team was impressed with the commitment exhibited by most CSOs to their beneficiaries. Some with very few resources have persevered largely on dedication to their mission. More than half of the CSOs surveyed said that they based their decision to introduce new – or expand existing – services on requests from the community, research, or the expertise of their staff. A significant number also indicated that this was done based on formal needs assessments, requests from beneficiaries, or requests from the national government. Still, 24% said that their decision was based on the priorities of foreign donors.

In terms of the role that DemNet has played in building the capacity of these CSOs to provide services:

- 90% of CSO respondents reported that their participation in the DemNet program helped them to expand either the number or the types of services offered to beneficiaries.

⁴⁸ This was a rather surprising finding and there is some question as to whether Skopje-based CSOs, as a result of their more frequent interaction with the national government, are more pessimistic than their counterparts outside of the capital about how difficult it can be to influence government policy and overcome bureaucratic intransigence.

⁴⁹ The term 'watchdog' was not defined in the survey, and questions have been raised as to whether respondents fully understood the term.

- 87% of CSO respondents said that their participation in DemNet helped them reach greater numbers of beneficiaries.
- 86% of CSO respondents indicated that through their participation in DemNet, they had more flexibility and a greater ability to respond to developing needs.
- 83% of CSO respondents said that participation in the program allowed them to improve the quality of their services, better monitor and measure the quality of services being offered, and track the number of beneficiaries being served.
- 65% of CSO respondents credited their participation in the program with improving their ability to coordinate with responsible government institutions in the provision of services.

During focus group discussions, many CSO representatives also stressed the importance of DemNet in terms of providing for continuity of service provision, which helped them to establish credentials within a certain field. Survey respondents repeatedly identified DemNet partner Nadez as a leader in the field of service provision:

SUCCESS STORY 9:

Nadez Expands Services to Victims of Violence

Through the support of the DemNet program, the CSO Nadez has been able to expand its services to beneficiaries, increasing the operating hours of its Trust hotline in Skopje (to 6 days a week, 15 hours per day), providing for longer stays for victims at its shelter (up to 48 hours), and establishing trust lines in Stip and Stumica. During the course of the project, its Skopje Trust hotline received 848 calls. Through the hotline, it registered 365 cases of violence against women, almost four cases per day. Forty-five victims sought refuge in the shelter. Nadez conducted home visits and interventions in the field and helped to file several cases with the courts. It also offered educational sessions for victims. In addition to its role in the provision of services, Nadez is also a leading advocate, serving as a member of the government coordination body that worked on changes to the law on domestic violence which was passed by Parliament in March 2004.

2. Civil Society Development

Human Capital

During the course of DemNet training, 3,753 participants attended training offered by ISC –either by expatriate or domestic trainers or its own staff in Skopje.⁵⁰ For more information on the provision of training and other learning opportunities by phase, please see Appendix 5. This number does not take into account the number of persons subsequently receiving formal or informal instruction from the original trainees or the number of persons receiving expert advising by ISC staff. In addition, no tracking data is being kept with respect to the ‘Macedonian Training Team’ utilized during the first two phases of DemNet. While this team has dispersed, many of its original members are still providing training under the umbrella of other organizations and projects. As such, one might expect a considerable multiplier effect. Despite the migration of individuals between organizations and institutions, i.e. some have moved to other CSOs or to intermediary support organizations (ISOs), others to government positions, and others to the donor community or international NGOs, many continue to reinvest their skills, whether directly or indirectly, in the development of Macedonia.

⁵⁰ There is some redundancy built into this number as it represents the sum of all participants, not individuals, i.e. some individuals likely attended multiple training events. No information on the number of individual trainees is available from ISC.

Critical Mass

There is considerable discussion as to whether or not a critical mass of CSOs, capable of leading the broader sector forward, currently exists in Macedonia. According to the authors of the civil society assessment report commissioned by USAID Macedonia in 2003, there was ‘virtually no evidence of a sustainable critical mass’ of CSOs in Macedonia.”⁵¹ The authors defined critical mass as some combination of mounting campaigns, building and articulating a case among elites, accessing the media, lobbying legislative bodies, mobilizing voters, and forming broad coalitions across the political spectrum and across different sectors.⁵² They acknowledge that all of these approaches have been used in Macedonia but, thus far, “not with enough perseverance and cumulative impact over time to attain critical mass.”⁵³

This evaluation team notes that while many of the CSOs receiving assistance under DemNet phases III and IV have made impressive strides in accessing government bodies and influencing public policies at the national level, they have yet to broadly and reliably mobilize public opinion or voters. This being said, the team does believe that core leadership has been developed in certain sub-sectors, if not across civil society as a whole. These include CSO anchor organizations working on youth issues, HIV/AIDs, and human trafficking. Some of these are beginning to form partnerships across sub-sectors. As noted elsewhere in this report, however, when asked about crosscutting issues and broader issues of concern to civil society, too many Phase IV CSOs responded from the narrow perspective of their own organization or area of expertise.

At the same time, the evaluation team does believe the DemNet program succeeded in elevating the skills and performance of its partners to another level and that these partners are among an elite most likely to constitute critical mass in the longer term. First, many of the partners in the later phases of the project are equally adept at service provision and advocacy. This means they are establishing roots within local communities or among interest groups within society, while gaining access to and influence on decision-makers at the local and national levels. This helps to confer legitimacy in each direction, i.e. both in the eyes of the public and among officials. The professionalism of DemNet CSOs, which is reflected in their skill sets, increasing specialization, their dedication to mission and beneficiaries, a willingness to work hard, and greater emphasis on achieving results differentiates them from the majority of NGOs that ‘exist’ in Macedonia. According to the draft NGO Sustainability Index for 2004, of the 5,500 registered NGOs, only about 275 are considered active. Given that ISC has awarded grants to 281 CSOs, it is not unreasonable to assume that there is a considerable degree of overlap between DemNet beneficiaries and the most active NGOs in the country⁵⁴

Intermediate Support Structures

DemNet’s greatest achievements to date appear to be in building strong ‘anchor’ organizations within different sub-sectors (focal areas) and fostering the development of issue-based networks and mentoring relationships between CSOs. Leadership oriented CSOs have emerged in a variety of fields, for example, youth, HIV/AIDs, anti-trafficking, violence against women, persons suffering from addictions, and the environment. These CSOs have coordinated the provision of services, managed issue-based coalitions

⁵¹ See *Assessment of the Civil Society Sector in Macedonia*, by Harry Blair, Richard Blue, Mihailo Popovski, and Ilo Trajkovski for DAI (28 August 2003), p. 45.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ While fully acknowledging that many DemNet partners have received funding from other sources and that some very strong NGOs in the country have not been supported by DemNet.

and networks, sustained cross-sectoral partnerships, and established an organizational culture that supports the transfer of knowledge to other CSOs.

As noted elsewhere in this report, there is a comparatively – and refreshingly – healthy attitude toward networking among the DemNet partners. While there were some not unexpected statements about how hard it can be to manage networks, build consensus, and pursue joint action, in practice DemNet supported networks are serving their function as mechanisms for information sharing, professional development, resource sharing, and other forms of support. This is a significant advancement from the time of the last DemNet evaluation. ISC's strategy of providing an open forum – and the time – for networks to evolve naturally combined with a focus on a select number of focal areas in phase IV, appears to have contributed to the development of several viable networks.

Also of importance are the mentoring relationships that have been established between strong CSOs and their less well established counterparts. The lack of competitiveness in these relationships speaks to the willingness of these CSOs to 'share the wealth' in terms of the knowledge and skills they gained from the DemNet program. According to the head of one mentor organization, "As a result of our ISC training, we have a commitment to help others." Among the sub-sector anchors, network leaders, and mentors:

- HERA and HOPs provide training, mentoring, and other support services, e.g. help with the preparation of project proposals and budgets, to other CSOs. HERA is currently helping to establish a new CSO, EGAL, which will work with the gay population.
- Youth Council Prilep succeeded in negotiating and leading the youth coalition SEGA which is comprised of 29 CSOs and which provides for the professional development of its members through training and advising services.
- The first Roma project implemented by Felix led to the creation of a spin-off CSO, Bairska Svetlina. Felix served as a mentor and, during the follow-on project, encouraged the new organization to assume a leading role.
- Biosphera also served as a mentor to the Roma CSO, Bairska Svetlina, helping them to register and open a bank account and allowing them to use Biosphera's office space and equipment until they opened their own office.
- GAMA is widely recognized for its support of other CSOs. It serves as a mentor and is even supporting the development of a new CSO, the Youth Active Center. It has been selected by FOSIM as a training provider for eight of its NGO resource centers.
- Rubikon has acted as mentor and support organization to a citizens' initiative that evolved into a new CSO called Vrska.
- ESE provides limited financial support to CSOs working on a range of women's issues as well as training, advising on issues like strategic planning, and legal aid. ESE requires its grantees to use the budget format used by ISC.

Support to organizations specifically defined as intermediary support organizations (ISOs) dedicated to supporting civil society development more broadly has been limited. When DemNet partners were asked to identify what organizations they believed to be the leading ISOs in Macedonia, only three received multiple mentions. These included MCIC, FOSIM (Soros), and ESE. Of these three organizations, only ESE has received assistance through the DemNet program. According to ISC program documentation, some field-based research was undertaken in phase III to identify existing CSOs

with the potential and inclination to serve as ISOs. According to ISC staff, they were unable to identify any qualified organizations with which to partner at that time.⁵⁵ As such, ISO development was not pursued as a programming priority during phase III.

As for CIRa, the DemNet successor that emerged during the fourth and last phase of the project, it is assumed that this organization will take its place as a leading ISO along with MCIC and FOSIM. Although it is too soon to fairly evaluate its performance or to authoritatively predict its future, some important benchmarks have been achieved:

- Formation of a professional board of directors;
- Introduction of formal policies and procedures;
- Establishment of financial management systems (and an indirect cost rate methodology);
- Adoption of a strategic plan and preparation of a workplan;
- Retention of core staff and adoption of a hierarchical organizational structure;
- Successful completion of a number of short-term contracts for multiple clients including DAI, OSCE, FOSIM, and USAID, and;
- External recognition, by domestic and international stakeholders, for providing value-added to the sector.

Stakeholders outside the organization rate CIRa's prospects for sustainability as 'medium.' Basically, this means that the organization is perceived as being well positioned due to the expertise, dedication, and reputation of the staff, but that its longer-term sustainability as an organization (beyond three years or so) is not yet assured. Without question, the staff has a well-developed set of marketable skills. According to one CIRa board member, "they have things to sell for example consulting services, training, and research . . . they are not starting from scratch." One client, DAI, was quite satisfied with CIRa's professionalism and the tangible outcomes achieved, e.g. codes of ethics for municipal employees and citizens' charters resulting from participatory processes facilitated by CIRa personnel. The bigger challenge for CIRa, however, may be finding the right balance between the activities it most wants to pursue, e.g. advocacy, and those that will keep the organization afloat financially, e.g. a range of consulting services. CIRa staff, while acknowledging the challenges they face, are confident about the future. This optimism stems from their long history of working as a team and overcoming other hurdles together as well as their commitment and drive to succeed.

Policy Framework for Development of the Third Sector⁵⁶

In general, the DemNet program has not been the leading actor in creating an improved legal framework for civil society development or advocating for policy reforms in support of the third sector. Rather, the International (now European) Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL) and its local partner MCIC have taken the initiative in this area.⁵⁷ When a new Law on Associations and Foundations was adopted in 1998, ISC stepped in after the fact to help augment the dissemination of information about the law and its ramifications to CSOs throughout the country. This was done through a series of brochures including one which provided essential guidance to CSOs on the registration process.

⁵⁵ With the exception of MCIC and FOSIM that were already serving in this capacity with considerable assistance from other donors (EU) and implementing partners (ICNL).

⁵⁶ This section addresses policy reform and advocacy initiatives pertaining to the third sector specifically. For a discussion of issue specific policy reforms by sub-sectors, e.g. the environment, health, women's issues, etc. please proceed to page 38.

⁵⁷ In other DemNet programs in the region, there is much greater integration between the ICNL program and that of the DemNet implementer. In one model, ICNL work on improving the legal and policy framework was formally brought under the umbrella of the DemNet program.

Today, modifications to the law are again being discussed, but thus far, DemNet has not significantly engaged in public information or advocacy initiatives on this issue within the civil society community. As noted elsewhere in this report, DemNet partners appeared not to understand the nature and substance of the proposed changes currently under consideration. In fairness, this was not an integral part of the program design and ISC was not in a position to directly lobby for policy change. Given DemNet's considerable network of CSOs, however, it could have played a more proactive role in explaining proposed reforms and their ramifications to CSO partners and in funneling input to the drafting team. Moreover, coordination and cooperation with ICNL and MCIC was not what it might have been.

ISC, and now CIRa, has been involved in a number of other initiatives intended empower the third sector. These include efforts to develop an NGO Code of Conduct for the sector, hosting of an NGO Fair (with MCIC and FOSIM), and establishing the Citizen's Platform, a coalition of 36 CSOs committed to advancing the sector's interests.

- The Code of Conduct initiative, while producing some organization-specific initiatives, has thus far not fulfilled the intended sector-wide result.⁵⁸ Some have attributed this to the fact that civil society in Macedonia was not yet ready for such "tools of the trade." This exercise has laid the groundwork for future progress in the areas of self-regulation and quality standards which are anticipated to gain increasing importance in the coming years.
- As for the NGO Fair, an event which ISC supports but does not lead, this is an important innovation in Macedonia, particularly in terms of providing CSOs with an opportunity to share information with each other and as a means of attracting media attention. According to the draft NGO Sustainability Index for 2004, 30 media outlets covered last year's fair free of charge. But, CSO expectations for the Fair have already grown and there is some criticism that not enough is being done to attract ordinary citizens and domestic businesses to the event. There was also a suggestion that the Fair be held in multiple locations, to allow local communities greater access.
- The Citizen's Platform is an exciting and relatively new initiative to increase indigenous ownership and leadership of the civil society agenda. CIRa is a founding member and heads the working group for mobilizing local resources and promoting voluntarism. Of the 36 organizational members, 47% are DemNet graduates.⁵⁹

Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

The increasingly open and constructive cross-sectoral partnerships, particularly between partner CSOs and government bodies have proven instrumental in achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable results. Greater access and cooperation signifies a greater (if not yet sufficient) recognition on the part of government actors in Macedonia of the traditional roles played by civil society in democratic countries, i.e. service delivery and advocacy.

Beyond serving to further consolidate the position of CSOs in society, these burgeoning relationships also increase the prospects that at least some leading organizations will be poised to assist in the implementation of a number of national strategies, including those on youth, HIV/AIDs, and anti-

⁵⁸ Fifty-three CSOs worked on drafting standards of excellence in 7-8 key areas. A working group was established to continue drafting a national code of conduct, but never met formally. Codes were reportedly developed by some organizations and networks.

⁵⁹ Based on information provided in December 2004, specifically 14 of 29 existing NGO members and 3 of 7 new NGOs in the process of formalizing their membership.

trafficking, to name a few, thereby cultivating a much needed domestic source of funding, which in term will be central to longer term financial sustainability and reduced dependency on the international community.

SUCCESS STORY 10:

GAMA Works with Government and Business to Promote Economic Development

DemNet partner GAMA has pursued cross-sectoral cooperation with government and business as a means of promoting economic development in Berovo and Pechevo. It has been instrumental in establishing the Business Forum, which is currently comprised of 14 companies in the area. Its government partners include the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, municipal government, and the region's Member of Parliament. (MP). Among the many services it provides are training and counseling for unemployed youth, promoting new business development and income-generation strategies, and offering consulting services to companies. It organized a fundraising event to raise money to hire a public relations (PR) officer for the MP from the region. Ten companies agreed to contribute 1,000 denars a month for the next three years to support the PR officer, who will help promote the economic development of the region, present its interests to Parliament, and lobby for favorable public policies. During the course of the project, GAMA succeeded in generating permanent employment for 51 individuals and temporary employment for 329 individuals as well as contributing to the development of four new businesses, all of which are still operational. One of these businesses, a project and construction company, is owned by Jordon Palevsi, who just 14 months ago was an employed youth who came to GAMA's training center (the Focus Center). With newfound skills, he established his company about a year ago. "I'm successful. So far, I've hired other young people on a contractual basis and I plan to continue doing so. Whenever there is a need for workers or services, I'll hire through the Focus Center." In addition, GAMA has been working with local branches of the Ministry of Interior to control black market imports from Bulgaria that compete with local agricultural products. Black market activity in the area has reportedly declined.

Public Visibility and Confidence

CSOs continue to make some strides in terms of enhancing their public visibility and trust in their organizations. According to polling data collected by BRIMA for USAID Macedonia in 2004, 49% of respondents trust NGOs ('definitely yes' or 'rather yes'). This represents a slight improvement over 2003. No other institutions enjoy a higher level of trust.⁶⁰ And, 48% believe that NGOs are either very or somewhat effective in solving problems facing the country. This exceeds the perceived effectiveness of all other institutions by a range of 9.5 to 22 percentage points. The percentage of respondents who believe that NGOs work for mutual interests has been trending positive over the years. As of 2004, polling data puts this at 41%. For a comparative perspective, only 5% of respondents in 2001 thought that NGOs worked for mutual interests. At the same time, the current number who say NGOs are only interested in their own good remains slightly higher (44% in 2004). While it is difficult to isolate the impact of the DemNet program relative to other factors, it seems plausible that an increasing emphasis on public outreach and media relations by DemNet partners when combined with greater coalition and network activities in a number of sub-sectors and a switch to results rather than process oriented management have contributed in some way to positive trends.⁶¹

⁶⁰ The police received the same rating as NGOs when combining the 'definitely yes' and 'rather yes' categories.

⁶¹ For more information, see section 'Public Outreach and Media Relations' on page 30.

3. Impacts within Society

Policy Reform

In terms of the role played by DemNet CSOs through the years in formulating public policy, several notable successes have been achieved across a variety of fields. These include the following:

- Passage of legislation requiring all municipalities to adopt a Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP).⁶²
- Leading role in the development of the National Youth Strategy, which has been submitted to Parliament and is awaiting review.
- Leading role in the development of the National Policy on HIV/AIDS, adopted on 1 December 2003, and the preparation of the official application, approved in September 2004, and workplan for the Global Fund Grant for HIV/AIDS.
- Input to the Draft National Policy for Conflict Reduction, which is currently awaiting parliamentary review.
- Input to changes to University Statutes as they pertain to the Students' Ombudsman, which have been adopted and are currently being implemented.
- Input to changes to the Law on Parliamentary Elections including the adoption of a quota for women candidates on party lists and expanded language on election observation that went into effect for the 2002 Parliamentary Elections.
- Laws addressing gender issues and violence against women, passed in March 2004. This includes the Law on Family Violence and changes to the Criminal Code as they pertain to the prosecution of cases of violence and abuse.
- Leading role on the development of government anti-trafficking measures.
- The Law on Family, which regulates adoption, child abuse, and other issues confronting families as well as outlining the role of the Centers for Social Work at the local level.
- Input to changes to provisions of the Labor Laws affecting the employment of persons with disabilities.
- Input to changes to the Penal Code as they pertain to juvenile penal measures and the adoption of a National Action Plan For the Prevention Of Juvenile Delinquency.
- Decentralization of services for persons suffering from drug abuse, i.e. restructuring of services by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.
- Designation of the northern shoreline of Prespa Lake as a state-protected bird habitat.
- The inclusion of provisions on the protection of caves and karst in the Law on Nature Protection (see Success Story 11 below).
- Introduction of new legislation on consumer protection passed in June 2002.
- Adoption of the European Convention on Ethnical Rights of Animals in 2000.
- Improvement of regulations on the value-added tax as they pertain to non-profit organizations.

⁶² The Regional Environmental Center (REC) also played an important role in this regard.

- Adoption of the Law on Social Protection, which defines different “vulnerable” populations, including victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and drug abuse, and the State’s responsibility to protect them.

With respect to their impact, 55% of CSO respondents indicate that the government partially adopted their recommendations. Ten percent say the government fully adopted their recommendations. Implementation remains problematic, however, as 35% of CSO respondents say that the policies, laws, or strategies on which they had input are not being implemented. Slightly fewer (31%) say that the policies on which they had input are being implemented. Another 35% offered no response to this question, which may suggest that some are not fully aware of the status of implementation.

SUCCESS STORY 11:

For Peoni, Success . . . Delayed

In transitional settings, forward momentum on policy reforms initiated by civil society can be undermined by changes in political power, institutional reforms within governing bodies, and shifting policy priorities based on unforeseen developments. During the course of this DemNet project, the government changed hands five times⁶³, various government agencies were restructured, and the ‘spillover’ effects of the Kosovar crisis, ethnic tensions at home, and reforms stemming from the Ohrid Peace Accord demanded government attention. As a result, progress on some civil society initiatives has been slowed. In some cases, the prospects of achieving desired results did not look good. A recent development, however, provides a good example of success delayed. During the first phase of DemNet, ISC funded the CSO, Peoni, for a period of six months to undertake public information and advocacy activities pertaining to the protection of caves throughout Macedonia. ⁶⁴ Of 350 caves explored and documented by the CSO, 90 were identified as having rare natural and cultural characteristics. Yet, at that time, legal protections were granted to only four caves. With DemNet support, Peoni organized working groups in 21 municipalities to promote expanded protections for the caves and conducted a media campaign to inform the public about the deterioration of the caves as well as their natural and cultural significance. Impressed by the group’s work, the Under-Secretary of the Macedonian Ministry of Urban Planning, Civil Engineering, and the Environment formally requested that they draft new legislation to better protect the caves. “Nobody knows more about the caves in Macedonia than this CSO and nobody is better positioned to draft this law,” the Under-Secretary declared at a press conference. This was a major step, as it represented the first instance of a government ministry inviting an CSO to develop national environmental policy. Peoni prepared a draft of the law, which was submitted to the Sector for Ecology under the Ministry of Urban Planning, Civil Engineering, and the Environment, which began its review of the law in 1998. That same year, the Ministry was restructured and became the Ministry for Environment. Later, it underwent additional reorganization and became the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning. For years, there seemed to be little progress, with debates over whether it was necessary to have stand-alone legislation protecting the caves, or whether this should be incorporated into broader environmental legislation. On 12 September 2004, 6.5 years after the close of the project, the Law for Nature Protection, which incorporated all of Peoni’s provisions for protecting the caves, was adopted. Today, Peoni continues to be an active organization. It has been granted authority by the City of Skopje to manage Matka Park, where it has several income-generating activities that defray some of the organization’s operating costs.

⁶³ Branko Crvenkovski, Ljubcho Georgievski, Branko Crvenkovski, Hari Kostov, and Vlado Buchkovski.

⁶⁴ In the months prior to DemNet Assistance, Peoni was funded by the Regional Environmental Center.

A number of CSOs have undertaken oversight activities and other efforts aimed at fostering improved implementation. For example, phase III and IV CSOs have managed to:

- Improve the application of international rules and standards on juvenile penalties through the court system (Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency).
- Improve implementation of existing legal provisions regarding conscientious observers (Peace Action, see Success Story 12 below).
- Monitor the court procedures at they pertain to human trafficking cases (through the coalition, “All for Fair Trails”).
- Improve application of the university statutes by building the skills of student trainers to assist the University Ombudsman. (Youth Education Forum).

Success Story 12:

Peace Action Facilitates Improved Implementation of Law on Defense

Article 10 of Macedonia’s Law on Defense provides conscientious objectors with an option to perform civil rather than military service. Nonetheless, the provision was poorly – and often improperly – implemented. With support from DemNet, CSO Peace Action undertook a public information campaign to raise awareness of the civil service option, provide a range of services to conscientious objectors, and lobby various government institutions. In cooperation with 17 other CSOs, it established information points that delivered 1,750 services to conscientious objectors and concerned citizens during the course of the project. It also fielded calls through a hotline. As a result of its efforts, Peace Action received an increase in the number of requests from organizations interested in hosting conscientious objectors and the number officially eligible to do so has increased to 44, up from 17 at the beginning of the project. Of 45 requests for civil service submitted to the Ministry of Defense with the assistance of Peace Action, 100% were accepted. In addition to these activities, the CSO is lobbying for changes to Article 10 and has played an integral role in the development of the draft National Youth Policy now before Parliament.

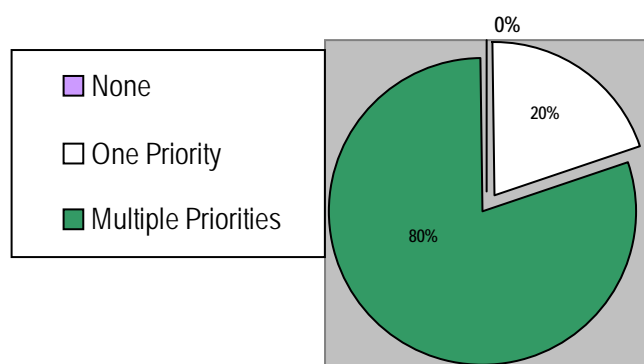
Of the CSOs respondents that have led LEAP and CAP processes in their communities, many are monitoring implementation of the action plans. Sixty percent (60%) are monitoring to ensure that efforts conform to original goals and targets, 50% are measuring progress toward achieving results, 40% are determining whether activities are proceeding according to schedule, and 30% are determining whether implementation costs are in-line with budget projections.

Improving Communities and the Lives of Ordinary Citizens

Through the LEAP and CAP projects, ordinary citizens and local communities are playing a greater role in addressing their own problems. According to the 10 respondents to the LEAP/CAP survey, 100% of the citizen’s groups have been able to complete at least one, if not multiple, priorities outlined in their communication action plans.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ According to ISC staff, of the 15 LEAP/CAP communities that successfully completed the planning process, only one did not proceed to implementation (Caska) and of these, only one failed to produce results with ISC funding (Kavadarci).

Chart 5: Status of LEAP and CAP Implementation



The evaluation team was particularly impressed with the results, thus far, of the CAPs directed at poor, mostly Roma, communities. Given the traditional segregation of these communities, official indifference to their plight, prejudices within society, and the limited experience of members of these communities to tackle a multitude of pressing problems, the gains made in such a short period of time are significant.

SUCCESS STORY 13:

Roma CSO “Bairska Svetlina” Empowers Community Residents to Improve Their Own Lives and Overcome Prejudice and Isolation

“Bairska Svetlina” and the Citizen’s Group in Bair facilitated a participatory process to develop a community action plan within their community. They identified five priority issues, which included education, health, prejudice, employment, and community based services. Thus far, the community has made progress on several fronts including: (1) The procurement of nearly 300 sets of textbooks (with partial funding provided by the citizens, themselves!), creation of a textbook library, and establishment of improved links with educational institutions; (2) the distribution of 200 hygienic packages, promotion of hygienic practices, and conduct of an environmental clean up action involving local residents and the communal hygiene company that provided tractors and trucks; (3) a multi-faceted public awareness and sensitization campaign to address prejudice that involved radio and television appeals, public debates, special events, and educational activities; (4) the registration of a trade company to promote business and employment opportunities which has already undertaken its first income-generating activity, i.e. scavenging, and; (4) renovation of a municipal building (the premises provided by the mayor) to serve as the CSO’s base of operations and as a community center.⁶⁶ In addition to these pre-established priorities, the community successfully lobbied the municipality to repave the road connecting this settlement to the rest of Bitola (which has already been completed). According to the head of the Citizen’s Group, “Citizens in our community had very low self-esteem and they did not believe in us. As a result of CAP implementation, this has begun to change. They are more confident and trusting. They can see that we are trying to do something for the good of the community. The attitudes of society have changed too, people now see that Roma citizens are active.”

⁶⁶ The plan is that this cultural center will provide health education, counseling, tutoring, and after-school activities for children, and continuing education for adults as well as host cultural events. There have been some complications on achieving this last priority as there is, reportedly, some dispute over ownership (or perhaps more appropriately “control” of the building). This dispute may also have some political undertones.

Information provided by ISC staff suggests that the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries of the LEAP and CAP projects exceeds **150,000 people**. In some cases, e.g. environmental improvement projects, the entire population of a local community reaps some benefit, while in others, e.g. hygiene or educational projects aimed at specific Roma populations, only a sub-section of the community directly benefits. But as a representative of the mayor in Bitola pointed out, even in these cases there is a multiplier effect. Clean up of trash dumps in Roma communities has a direct bearing on the health of that settlement, but it also has a broader impact since rains can wash the refuse into the river and to other parts of town.

According to the CSOs leading a LEAP or CAP process, the results within their communities are attracting attention. Ninety percent (90%) of CSO respondents report that they have received inquiries from other communities to learn how to introduce a LEAP or CAP process and/or that they have actively promoted the LEAP/CAP model beyond their own communities. Of these, 60% report that a community action process modeled on a LEAP or CAP has been introduced in other communities as a result of these inquiries and outreach efforts. As territorial reorganization is about to take place, some stakeholders raised questions about the future of LEAP or CAP processes in communities that are being incorporated into other, larger municipalities. The case of Miravci, however, suggests that such concerns are unfounded. As highlighted in the success story below, the Miravci experience demonstrates the extent to which CAP implementation activities can attract the attention of the neighboring municipalities (and their politicians) and even the region's Member of Parliament (MP):

SUCCESS STORY 14:

Miravci CAP Implementation Attracts Interest of Neighboring Municipality and Member of Parliament

Miravci is a poor community located close to the Greek border. It's an agricultural town with high unemployment and little outside investment. At the beginning of the community action planning process, there was considerable skepticism in the community. Some asked what difference ordinary citizens could make when it came to solving local problems. Others questioned the need to undertake such a methodical planning process. The mayor, herself, reportedly asked: *Why plan? Let's just build. Let's get the money and build!* Over time, others also wondered about the outcome of the CAP, as under a new plan for territorial reorganization, Miravci was set to be incorporated into the larger, neighboring municipality of Gevgelija. Ultimately, however, attitudes changed and the Citizens' Group, led by the CSO Evropski Forum, proved highly effective in galvanizing public opinion to initiate a community improvement project that leveraged funding and support from the local government. The first priority was to renovate the town square as a means of stimulating downtown commerce, providing an attractive venue for citizen's to assemble, and as a means of fostering local pride. Everyone pitched in. The local public communal enterprise, for example, did much more work than obligated under its contract. Today, the reconstructed square provides space for public events and a recreational area as well as a children's playground. These results attracted attention beyond the immediate community and at the inauguration of the new square on 9 November 2004, not only were local citizens, government officials, businesses and foreign donors in attendance, but also the mayor of Gevgelija and the Member of Parliament representing the region. No doubt these guests fully appreciated the importance of being associated with success in the form of tangible results and of the political value of reaching out to what will soon be a new set of voters within their constituency. Discussions between the neighboring mayor and Evropski Forum are already underway and lobbying has begun to gain support for initiatives important to the citizens and the NGO community in Miravci.

Lead CSO respondents (100%) also believe that their local governments are somewhat more inclined to use participatory decision-making processes as a result of LEAP or CAP projects in which they participated.

Serving Disadvantaged, Marginalized, and At-Risk Populations

As noted throughout this report, DemNet partners in the later phases of the program have demonstrated increasing leadership in the provision of services to a variety of disadvantaged and marginalized groups including persons with disabilities, illiterate women, persons suffering from various forms of addiction, victims of violence and human-trafficking, persons living with HIV/AIDs, juvenile delinquents and other at-risk children, and Roma communities.

SUCCESS STORY 15:

Local CSOs work to Facilitate Better Integration of Roma Children (and their Parents) into Primary School Systems

The CSO, Felix is working in a multi-ethnic primary school, “Gjorgji Sugarev” in Bitola to raise awareness and sensitivity among teachers, school administrators, and parents for greater inclusion of Roma in the education system and to provide a variety of services aimed at improving the attendance records of Roma students. Trust among students of various ethnic backgrounds is built through interactive and creative workshops addressing such themes as intercultural learning, non-violent communication, and children’s rights. Felix activists also trained and coached teachers on innovative methods of student and parent intervention. As a result, teachers have begun making home visits to parents whose children are not attending class regularly (70% of the total thus far) and have adjusted their classroom management to promote more equal attention toward and participation of Roma children. As a result, the number of Roma children regularly attending classes has increased, Roma parents are increasingly engaged in decision-making in the school (including the first ever Roma parent to serve on the School Council), and Felix’s student-parent-teacher model has been adopted into the teacher’s curriculum at the University of Bitola Pedagogical Faculty. As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between the university and Felix, this model will be replicated in other classrooms throughout the country. Felix has even succeeded in getting three local businesses to sponsor the education of a Roma girl in the community. They had agreed that however long she remains in school and to whatever levels of education she aspires, they will cover the associated costs.

In Prilep, the Center for Civil Initiative (CCI) and the Roma NGO, ‘Romani Shukaripa’ lead the efforts of the Citizen’s Group in Trizla (CAP) to improve the education of Roma children. This effort included organizing supplemental classes (tutoring and test preparation) for Roma children, both at school and at home, promoting the importance of education to Roma parents, and targeted outreach activities aimed at increasing primary school enrollment and graduation rates. According to the director of the primary school, ‘Dobre Javnovski,’ the number of eighth graders has been increasing as a result of the program. The number of Roma students graduating from 8th grade and continuing with their secondary education (9th grade) has gone up from 16 in 2002 to 21 in 2003 (when implementation first began) and then 30 in 2004.⁶⁷ Enrollment numbers for 2004 were generally on the rise across grades with impressive numbers at lower levels, e.g. double the number of children transferring from 5th to 6th grade than was expected and an increase in first grade enrollment (114 children enrolled in 2004). Due to the limited resources of the school, the Citizen’s Group also allocated money to purchase chairs and textbooks to accommodate the burgeoning student body. Although ISC funding has ended, teachers continue to work with parents to ensure to perpetuate positive changes in attitude and behavior.

⁶⁷ The estimate of 32 is based on figures provided by the NGO partners, although according to the school director, graduation rates had actually doubled (to 42) in 2004.

ISC has not maintained consistent tracking data on the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries of partner CSO services during the entirety of the DemNet program nor for CSOs that have graduated from the program but continue to offer and expand their services. According to information collected during this evaluation, the potential number could be quite significant. Specifically, estimates provided by the 29 CSOs surveyed, indicate that the number of direct beneficiaries, either individually or via networks, has exceeded **32,500 people in the past year alone**. Moreover, beneficiaries of these services are extremely satisfied. Beneficiary surveys conducted by various DemNet partners, suggest a satisfaction rate among the primary target population of 80 – 90%.

SUCCESS STORY 16:

Cerenja Helps Illiterate Women Gain Primary Education Certification

The CSO, Cerenja, worked with 60 illiterate Roma women, teaching them to write all the letters in the alphabet and basic numbers. Courses aimed at improving literacy and awareness of human rights and gender issues were offered at the Community Center in Stip. Of the participants, more than 50% took the exam offered by the Worker's University, which enables those who pass to get a certificate of primary education. All the women who took the test were able to obtain the coveted certificate, which provides greater access to public services including health care and social insurance. At a public debate addressing women's right to education and broader issues of equality, the spouses of participants as well as other male family members – rather than responding in a defensive or negative manner - expressed their own desires to receive education through the program.

With respect to the focal areas established in the fourth phase of DemNet, the conflict management group was most pessimistic about its own results, this despite the short term successes of organizations like Felix, SOS, and Megashi. This assessment was generally shared by CSOs in other focal areas. According to one stakeholder, "Existing inter-ethnic cooperation is largely artificial. CSOs have only dealt with the problem superficially." These beliefs tended to stem from the systemic nature of the problem including counter-productive policies and practices on the part of the government and within the educational system, prejudices within the home, and the political and economic dimension of the "ethnic problem" when compared to the relatively limited and brief interventions on the part of these CSOs.

In general, service-oriented CSOs are clearly addressing real needs that exist within society, working with groups that have been stigmatized or otherwise overlooked, and filling in gaps left by the collapsing social safety net in the post-Yugoslav era. Both CSO and government representatives interviewed for the current evaluation spoke of the role of NGOs in supplementing government services and in filling in existing gaps in service delivery.

C. Other Issues for Consideration

During the course of conversations with various stakeholders, a number of other issues were routinely raised. As these do not easily fit into other categories, they are presented herein.

1. Over-extension of Program in Phase III

There was general agreement that ISC was seriously over-extended during the third phase of the program with a total of 148 CSOs receiving assistance either through the small grants program, the LEAPs and CAPs projects, and integrated assistance involving grants, training, and TA to 15 CSOs carried over from phase II and 28 new CSOs. At the height of phase III, each program coordinator was managing approximately 20 different CSOs. This workload adversely affected the quality and depth of assistance provided to CSO partners, for example in terms of ISC's ability to provide advising, and

reduced the thoroughness of management and oversight. This in turn, led to problems with some of the program components, CAPs providing perhaps the best example. According to ISC staff, to provide sound management, project coordinators should only be responsible for five or so CSOs. This impression is consistent with consulting standards that recommend an optimal portfolio of five to eight clients per consultant.

2. Outreach to Other Implementers

In terms of external outreach to other international and domestic partners implementing similar or complementary programs, sentiments were mixed. Organizations working at the community level, for example DAI and CSHI, tended to rate the quality of communication and coordination as being good. Those working on special projects, such as the small grants programs in support of elections (IFES for example) also positively rated their interaction with ISC. However, those working on broader civil society development, such as ICNL, FOSIM (Soros), and MCIC, were more likely to say that it was inadequate or one-sided.

3. Localization Strategy

During the course of the evaluation, perhaps the most lively discussions revolved around ISC's approach to localization, i.e. efforts to prepare local staff at ISC in Macedonia to establish their own CSO that might carry on ISC's legacy once the DemNet program came to an end. In general, the concept of localization was recognized as a priority by ISC Vermont in its 1998 strategic plan. In the Macedonian context, localization was not substantially operationalized until phase IV of the DemNet program when it was included in the program's workplan.⁶⁸ Most of the progress was made in 2004, the last year of the program. Among the steps undertaken by ISC:

- Throughout the course of the project, considerable investments were made by ISC to cultivate the skills of the local staff under the tutelage of various expatriate staff and consultants and a variety of professional development opportunities both in Macedonia and beyond its borders. This played a central role in developing the human capital of the organization.
- Discussions of an exit strategy, including the prospect of localization, were initiated in 2000.
- In late 2002, an outside facilitator was brought in, at ISC's expense, to inject some momentum to the localization process and to help the staff move toward the development of a strategy in support of this process. This strategy was prepared in May 2003 and formed the basis for subsequent discussions and cooperation.
- In the summer of 2003, localization first appears in DemNet program planning documents, e.g. the 2003 workplan.⁶⁹
- Training was provided in July 2004 on indirect cost allocation methods and on how to develop agency budgets. Assistance was also provided in developing an indirect cost methodology for CIRa.
- Two CIRa staff members participated in a study tour to Slovakia and Hungary to study successfully localized organizations that emerged from other DemNet programs.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between ISC and CIRa on 18 October 2004.

⁶⁸ It should be noted that the creation of a local 'spin-off' of ISC was not an aim of the DemNet program.

⁶⁹ Interestingly, various stakeholders claim to have taken the lead in getting localization into the workplan at this juncture, i.e. USAID Macedonia, ISC Vermont, and the local staff. Nonetheless, all parties apparently were in agreement that, at this phase, localization must be a priority.

- ISC has provided a direct grant to CIRa. Two tranches of funds totaling \$51,159.63, have been transferred to date (in November and December 2004) with a balance of \$11,695.47 yet to be dispersed (of which \$10,000 will come from Special Opportunities funding).

Throughout this process, ISC Vermont conscientiously avoided forcing localization on the staff in Macedonia or imposing foreign models as it deemed that such an approach would not produce sustainable results. Some suggested that ISC support kept pace with the capacity and commitment of the local staff and intensified once they had firmly coalesced around a plan for localization. Other stakeholders, both within and outside the organization, felt that ISC had not sufficiently – or perhaps consistently – engaged sufficiently early in localization in terms of *day-to-day facilitation on the ground*. Basically, this included giving a clear ‘green light’ to move forward in Skopje, providing on-going encouragement and support, and creating space and time for the local staff to undertake visioning and planning, and facilitating these activities as necessary.

The evaluation team strongly agrees with ISC that imposing or forcing localization is not a successful strategy. At the same time, it believes that localization is unlikely to move forward sufficiently absent “explicit approval from the ‘mother’ organization and specific/concrete gestures of support and guidance.”⁷⁰ As such, it has concluded that more routine engagement and facilitation by COPs in the latter half of phase III and early in phase IV would have helped the local staff to ‘coalesce’ and enabled CIRa to meet its benchmarks (see accomplishments outlined on page 36 above) sooner. This, in turn, would have allowed CIRa to be *even better positioned* by having another year of ‘incubation’ within the DemNet program during which it could develop its experience, credibility, and readiness as an organization. For example:

- CIRa would have been registered as an independent organization sooner with ISC transferring increasing responsibility for components of the DemNet program to them. Funding could have been provided incrementally over a longer period with increasing financial support based on growing capabilities and proven performance.
- CIRa would have established a clear ‘track record’ as an independent entity by going through an entire fiscal year cycle with a functioning board, full time staff, an audited financial report, and a published annual report most of which are now mandatory criteria for funding by some of the larger donors operating in Macedonia such as the EU.
- CIRa would have had an extra year to promote its image, mission, and services as well as to secure more of its organizational budget through fundraising activities.⁷¹

These steps would have also reduced the stresses on the local staff that stemmed from the intensity of having to simultaneously launch the new organization and close down a decade long DemNet program.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation System

ISC, in cooperation with its local partners, has achieved a significant number of results. Yet, these have not been adequately captured or presented throughout the entirety of the program. The assessment team found multiple weaknesses with respect to M&E and results reporting, particularly during the first three

⁷⁰ Based on comments offered by ISC staff.

⁷¹ Several local staff noted the amount of time that typically passes between submission of a proposal (which in itself takes a lot of time), to a formal decision by the donor to fund (or not fund) the program, to the point that funds are actually deposited in an NGO’s bank account.

phases of the program. This undermined ISC's ability to specifically map and portray the cumulative success of the program.

There was no workplan or performance-monitoring plan for the first phase of the project. Although USAID confirmed that these were not required under the Cooperative Agreement language, the absence of such management tools made it difficult to reconcile anticipated and end results. While workplans were instituted in the second phase, systematic performance monitoring systems and plans do not appear to have been put into place or consistently applied until the fourth phase of the project. In addition, ISC quarterly reports were largely process-oriented for most of the program with updates on the status of implementation and other administrative matters with little or no information on tangible results.

Throughout the course of the project, ISC did not consistently collect tracking data that might have better enabled it to portray cumulative results and multiplier effects, e.g. up to date grids tracking all laws, strategies, and action plans positively impacted by CSOs and their status, e.g. under review, adopted by parliament, etc.; quarterly and consolidated data on the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries of community and CSO (service oriented) projects including information – as applicable – on new and repeat beneficiaries; information on the 'active status' of CSOs that have graduated from ISC assistance (possibly applying graduated activity levels as has been done in this and other evaluations); data on the implementation status of all LEAPs (and CAPs) that have graduated from ISC assistance (those that did not achieve all of their priorities at the time of graduation); non-redundant data on the number of CSOs and individuals trained directly by ISC staff and possibly by members of the Macedonian Training Team.⁷²

There was a significant improvement in the use of performance monitoring tools and the collection of data during the fourth phase and in the quality of reporting. At the same time, performance monitoring and data collection appears to be happening on parallel tracks, with local staff using their own log frames to collect data from CSO partners (in Macedonian language) which may – or may not – be fed into the English language quarterly reports, performance monitoring grids, and other information products submitted to USAID.

E. Major Lessons Learned

Throughout the course of the DemNet project, ISC has made a considerable effort to identify lessons learned. A review of program documentation and discussions with staff suggest that these lessons have been applied to program methodologies and management practices in order to achieve better results, i.e. 'adaptive management.'

While there have been many more lessons learned through the years than can be efficiently presented here, this section focuses on some of the major lessons learned, particularly in the latter half of the project. For some additional details on ISC identified lessons learned, please refer to Appendix 10.

- The provision of integrated assistance comprised of training, technical assistance and grants has a greater impact on the prospects for CSO sustainability than the provision of grants solely for the purpose of project implementation, i.e. investments in internal capacity building positively affect external performance and impact.
- The development of training based on formal organizational needs assessments and participatory planning methods better meets the needs of partner CSOs. And, the provision of this specially

⁷² Comparatively speaking, this type of tracking data is being collected by some other DemNet projects in the region.

tailored training to a broader set of individuals within CSOs and communities contributes to increased and sustained application of skills.

- Partnerships between CSOs, whether via networks, coalitions, or mentoring relationships, and across sectors, i.e. with government and business, lead to the achievement of greater results and provide a valuable multiplier effect in terms of knowledge transfer. The creation of real partnerships, however, takes time.
- More focused and in-depth approaches have tended to produce more easily identifiable and strategically oriented results, e.g. focal area approach, than general and broad approaches that tend to diffuse impact.
- The cultivation of intermediary support organizations, such as CIRa, that will for part of the indigenous infrastructure supporting civil society development in the future, requires sequential and longer-term development.
- The provision of training and the application of skills on an incremental basis in LEAP and CAP communities, when combined with “hands-on” management by ISC and the lead CSO throughout the entire process produces better results than “front loaded” training and less rigorous management.
- The success of LEAPs and CAPs is also contingent upon the development of constructive relationships between lead CSOs/Citizens’ Groups and local officials and adequate “buy-in” by those officials from the outset of the project. More generally, open and constructive relationships between government and CSOs are essential to achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable results.
- Rapid progression from planning to implementation in LEAP and CAP communities allowed CSOs/Citizen’s Groups to achieve tangible results that were essential to building trust and confidence upon which engagement and momentum can be sustained.
- Well-developed monitoring and evaluation plans and the consistent and continual collection of performance data are essential for ISC to effectively identify and capture its results, promote its successes, and build institutional memory.

V. Conclusions

During its nearly 10-year history, the ISC DemNet program in Macedonia has achieved many results of which the organization, its staff and partners, and USAID/Macedonia can be proud. This section summarizes major accomplishments and legacies, with an emphasis on the latter half of the program. Specifically, DemNet has:

*The Macedonia
DemNet
program
cultivated
successful
mentoring
relationships
between
stronger CSOs
and their less
experienced
counterparts.*

- Contributed to the development of genuinely effective networks within a number of sub-sectors based on shared visions and interests.
- Cultivated successful mentoring relationships between stronger CSOs and their less experienced counterparts.
- Provided for the emergence of anchor organizations (leaders) across a number of sub-sectors.
- Expanded and elevated the influence of CSOs in the sphere of public policy formulation as evidenced by the incorporation of CSO recommendations into new and amended legislation, national strategies, and action plans covering a wide array of issues.
- Empowered CSOs and Citizen's Groups to address real problems within society and their own communities as well as among disadvantaged, marginalized, and at-risk groups and provided for continued and expanded service delivery.
- Contributed to the emergence of a core group of CSOs that are equally proficient in service provision and advocacy.
- Led to significant improvements in relationships between partner CSOs and virtually all stakeholder groups including ordinary citizens, other CSOs, government institutions, business, and the mass media.
- Improved cross-sectoral cooperation, particularly between CSOs and government as evidenced by the inclusion of CSO representatives on government task forces, working groups, and multidisciplinary teams at the national level as well as local government support of and participation in community action projects and other CSO initiatives in select localities.
- Increased the organizational capacity, confidence, and prospects for sustainability of an elite group of CSOs that is poised to become Macedonia's 'critical mass' in the years to come and built indigenous training capacity among individual trainers and training organizations.
- Introduced models for multi-stakeholder collaboration that are being replicated in various local communities and adapted to an array of participatory planning processes and community action projects.
- Facilitated the creation of action plans within select communities that have served as a blueprint for local development, provided a sound basis for fundraising, opened up local government decision-making processes, and generated tangible community improvements.
- Launched an ISO, CIRa, with the potential to play a leading role in the development of Macedonia's civil society.

With these accomplishments in mind, this team concludes that most of the goals and objectives established by ISC for the last two phases of the DemNet program (and which were the primary focus of this inquiry) were met at the time of the current evaluation. With respect to the objectives established in phase III: (1) CSOs participating in the program have provided a greater voice for citizens to influence public policies; (2) the advocacy and coalition-building [networking] capacities of CSOs participating in the program have been improved, and; (3) models for successful cross-sectoral cooperation in response to local problems have been provided [and replicated].⁷³

*The Macedonia
DemNet
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CSOs and
Citizen's Groups
to address real
problems
within society
and their own
communities.*

As for the goals outlined for phase IV: (1) the greater emphasis of DemNet partner CSOs on results has contributed to improved credibility and impact of those CSOs and civil society more generally; (2) the prospects for sustainability of participating CSOs has improved considerably and these organizations are well-positioned to become a critical mass in the future (although critical mass has not yet been achieved); (3) partnerships between DemNet CSOs and with government and business have succeeded in defining challenges and implementing solutions (although considerably more progress was made with government than with the business community), and; (4) through the sub-sector 'anchor' organizations, a variety of networks such as SEGA, and CIRa, in particular, mechanisms and entities have been put into place that are committed to – and have the requisite skills - to support other CSOs in the aftermath of the DemNet program.⁷⁴

⁷³ Objectives as outlined in the DemNet proposal for Phase III.

⁷⁴ Goals as outlined in the DemNet proposal for Phase IV.

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference

Final Report of ISC DemNet Program in Macedonia—November 2004

ISC Macedonia has contracted a two-person team to carry out a final evaluation of its DemNet program, which has been active since 1995. The team plans to conduct interviews with stakeholders representing civil society organizations (CSOs) across various sectors, government representatives at the national and municipal levels, donors, international NGOs, and independent experts. Focus groups and individual interviews will be carried out between 3 and 12 November 2004 in Skopje, Prelip, Bitola, and surrounding areas. Information will also be collected through written surveys, telephone interviews, and a review of pertinent program documents and research. The primary focus of this evaluation will be the third and fourth phases of the project, which were implemented between 2000 and 2004.

The objectives of the current evaluation are to:

- (1) Identify the core strengths of the ISC DemNet program, particularly in terms of the effectiveness of program methodologies, strategies, and approaches.
- (2) Identify tangible impacts of the program, both in terms of the organizational sustainability of CSOs and the extent to which these CSOs have made a difference in their communities and/or society at large.
- (3) Identify lessons that can be drawn from this DemNet program that might be applied to other programs in and beyond Macedonia.

In addition, there will be some discussion of remaining challenges to the development of civil society as perceived by DemNet beneficiaries. It is important to note that this evaluation is directed at the overall impact of the ISC DemNet project in Macedonia, not the performance of a particular CSO beneficiary.

THE EVALUATION TEAM IS COMPRISED OF:

Catherine Barnes: Since 1990, Ms. Barnes has worked on democracy and governance projects in 24 countries, primarily in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Ms. Barnes' applies her expertise in organizational and mass communications and public information, outreach, and advocacy to political development, electoral reform, local governance, and NGO sector support projects. Her experience spans all facets of project realization from design and implementation to management (both at headquarters and in the field) and evaluation. Following employment at IRI and IFES, Ms. Barnes established her own consultancy in 1997. She has worked with an array of partners in government, politics, advertising, mass media, academia, and civil society. Ms. Barnes has led civil society assessments and DemNet evaluations in Croatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia (2004). She is the author of several articles on approaches to foreign aid and on political developments in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

Natasa Gaber: Legal and NGO expert, Dr. Natasa Gaber is employed at that Institute for Sociological, Political, and Juridical Research. Dr. Gaber has advised the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on a variety of laws, policies and strategies. She contributed to the drafting of the Law on Citizens' Associations and Foundations (adopted in 1998) and subsequent amendments (under consideration in 2004). She has also co-authored commentary on the Law. Dr. Gaber serves as a consultant to the

International Center for Non-Profit Law (ICNL). She has also advised USAID on preparation of the NGO Sustainability Index Report for Macedonia. Dr. Gaber has co-authored a textbook on associations and foundations as well as numerous articles and studies on civil society in Macedonia, including those on women's NGOs, cooperation between NGOs and the business sector, and obstacles to NGO partnerships and constituency relations. In 1997/1998, Dr. Gaber was awarded a Robert McNamara Fellowship to study the role of NGOs in the development of Macedonia

APPENDIX 2

List of Interviewees

ISC Staff in Vermont

George Hamilton
Barbara Felitti
Rick Hall
Tom Buck
Roger Clapp
Susan Stitley

ISC/CIRa Staff in Macedonia

Stephanie Rust
Zoran Stojkovski
Zarko Koneski
Nikica Kusinikova
Irena Stevcevska
Gordana Stefkovska-Veljanovska
Jelena Janevska
Suzana Pasharikovska
Olivera Zivkovska
Irhideja Slatkova-Kocareva
Biljana Tusheva
Arta Emushi
Jeton Krasniki
Zoran Bogdanovski

Meetings with Government Representatives

Emilijan Stankovic, Agency for Youth and Sport
Violeta Nalevska, Advisory to the Mayor of Bitola
Lile Svetanovska, Open Office of the Mayor of Prelip

Face to Face Interviews with Donors, International Implementing Organizations, and ISOs

Kathy Stermer, USAID Macedonia
Melita Cokrevska, USAID Macedonia
Ball Althaus, DAI, "Making Decentralization Work" Program
Dianna Wuagneux, Ph.D, CSHI
Jeton Krasnici (former ISC staffer), UN
Jutta Bulling, EAR
Lile Alceva, MCIC
Slavica Indzevska, FOSIM (Soros)
Doug Routzen, ICNL

Face-To-Face Interviews with CSOs and Citizens' Committees

Neshad Azemovski, Biosphera

Ese

Biljana Ginova, Felix

HERA

HOPs

Open Gate

Zoran Ilieski, Youth Council - Prelip

Ramadan Andonov, Citizens Committee of Bair (Bitola)

Goce Pereski, Citizens Committee of Trizla (Prelip)

Trajche Talimidzioski, Primary School 'Dobre Jovanovski'

CAP/LEAP Focus Group

Sotir Andov, Association of Citizens "Bairska Svetlina," Bitola

Mitko Basov, Evropski Forum, Miravci

Zekir Abdulov, HDZR KHAM, Delcevo

Tahir Selimvoski, Romani Sukaripa, Prelip

Jasminka Ristova, Women From the Third Millennium, Debar

Gazmend Cami, Ecological Association, Desat

Hasan Jasari, Ortelius, Tetovo

Conflict Reduction Focus Group

Sonja Arsovska, SOS, Kumanovo

Biljana Ginova, Felix

Kasami Pranvera, Multikultura, Tetovo

Vladimir Karaev and Natasha Karaeva, Rubikon, Skopje

Senad Bekiri, Milenium, Tetovo

Raxhep Raimi, Megashi, Skopje

Gender and Anti-Trafficking Focus Group

Dusica Dimitrovska-Gajdovska, Euro Balkan, Skopje

Jane Beleski, ESE, Skopje

Enise Demirova, Cerenje, Stip

Todorka Petkova, Nadez, Skopje

Kevsera Memdeova, Esma, Skopje

Grants Management Focus Group

Nafi Sarachini, EU Mission to Macedonia

Geraldine Bjallerstedt, OSCE

Vladanka Andreeva, UNAIDS

Kristina Kolozova, Embassy of Switzerland (former ISC employee)

Natasha Angelevska, FOSIM

HIV/AIDS Focus Group

Sasho Todorovski, Poraka, Sveti Nikole

Darko Kostovski, HOPS, Skopje

Milena Stevanovic, HERA, Skopje

Natka Pachovska, Doverba, Skopje

Andrea Puzderliski, EMSA, Skopje

Youth Focus Group

Nadica Kostoska, Association of Transactional Analysis of Macedonia (MATA), Skopje
Jemal Mehmed, Nijazi Bej (AECAS), Resen
Nada Naumovska, Youth Educational Forum, Skopje
Lujza Avramoska, Center for Civic Initiative, Prelip
Kitanoski Boro, Peace Action, Prelip
Petre Mrkev, Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, Kavadarci
Zoran Ilieski, Youth Council, Prelip
Irena Kolovska and Dejan Kolovski, GAMA, Berovo

Telephone Survey

Women's Association Probistip
Environmental Movement Molika
Izgrev, Sveti Nikole
Vita Vita, Bitola
Desat, Debar
Citizen Committee for Development, Probistip
Center for Public Participation, Tetovo
Multikultura, Tetovo
Association of Single Mothers, Sveti Nikole
Shelter Center, Skopje
Zenska Akcija, Skopje
Center for Civic Initiative, Prelip
Center for Democratic Development, Skopje
Association for Bird Study and Protection
Komaja, Skopje
Organization of Turk Women, Ohrid
Association of Parents of Children with Cerebral Palsey, Veles
Association of Single Mothers Dika, Skopje
Scout Squad Goce Delcev, Sveti Nikole
IARES

APPENDIX 3

Menu of Questions

CSO Focus Group Discussions (by focal area)

1. What were the most effective approaches to assistance, for example, advising by ISC staff, general training for a group of CSOs, specialized training for individual NGOs, organizational strengthening grants, project implementation grants, and/or networking activities? Why?
2. Was your CSO able to apply all the knowledge and skills obtained as a result of DemNet training? If not, why?
3. Were projects supported by the DemNet program well balanced in terms of the types of activities (or sub-sectors/focal areas)? Were any important types of activities (or sub-sectors/focal areas) overlooked?
4. Were project supported by the DemNet program well balanced in terms of regional coverage? Why?
5. Did your CSO have to make any adjustments to your projects to improve their effectiveness and impact? (lessons learned) If yes, please elaborate.
6. What positive and tangible impact have DemNet CSOs made in terms of: (a) the lives of ordinary citizens in their respective communities? (b) society at large? On what basis would you justify this belief?
7. Have the DemNet CSOs played a role in gradually repairing the social fabric of Macedonia since 2001? How?
8. What distinguishes DemNet CSOs (in terms of efficacy and success) from the much larger number of CSOs registered in Macedonia?
9. How successful are the networks/coalitions that have emerged as a result of the DemNet program? Do they have a direct and concrete output (product) and impact? Specify.
10. Have the DemNet CSOs contributed to improving the public image (including via the media) of civil society in Macedonia? If yes, how?
11. What are the primary obstacles to civil society development in Macedonia n the next 3 – 5 years?
12. What are the main opportunities for civil society development in Macedonia in the next 3 – 5 years. [If necessary, prompt a discussion of the role of CSO in light of decentralization of power to local government in 2005]

Interviews with Lead CSOs (anchor organizations)

1. Is your CSO engaged in activities to support and strengthen other CSOs, either within your focal area or in civil society more broadly? What kind of activities, e.g. information-sharing, consulting services, mentoring, training . . . Please specify.

2. What has been the impact of these activities, if any?
3. What are the plans of the CSO in the next 3 – 5 years? [If the CSO does not indicate any support to other CSOs, prompt].
4. To what extent is there indigenous capacity within Macedonia to support the development of civil society (as opposed to relying on foreign organizations like ISC)?
5. To what extent does your CSO collaborate with other leading civil society organizations such as MCIC or FOSIM? How would you describe the quality and effectiveness of these relationships?
6. Do you think there is any need or benefit to joining with other CSOs outside your sub-sector to advance a common agenda? [for example, improving the legal and fiscal framework for CSOs in Macedonia]
7. What do you see as the opportunities to further develop civil society in Macedonia in the next 3 – 5 years?
8. What are the main obstacles to further development of civil society in Macedonia in the next 3 – 5 years?
9. What lessons have you drawn from the DemNet experience, in terms of what works and what doesn't?

LEAP/CAP Focus Group (representatives of lead CSOs)

1. Do you believe that the LEAP/CAP planning process could have been made more effective? If yes, how?
2. Do you believe that the LEAP/CAP implementation process could have been made more effective? If yes, how?
3. How useful were opportunities to meet with other LEAP/CAP communities and share experiences?
4. To what extent has the LEAP/CAP process contributed to greater citizen activism in your community?
5. Was this level of activism sustained after the planning process was completed?
6. Did the LEAP/CAP process have any impact on public impressions that ordinary citizens can influence local government decision-making?
7. Did the LEAP/CAP process have an impact on public impressions that ordinary citizens can come together to solve common problems?
8. What has been the tangible impact of the LEAP/CAPs in your community?
9. In view of decentralization of power to local governments, what opportunities and problems will you face?
10. What do you think the prospects are for elevating or reorienting the LEAP/CAP model to activities of a regional (multiple communities) or national level?

Telephone Interview with Small Grantees

1. How did your CSO get the project idea that you presented to DemNet for funding?
2. Did the grant that you received through the DemNet program enable your CSO to leverage funds from other donors/sources?
3. Were you later able to expand the project funded through the DemNet grant into a larger program?
4. To what extent was your CSO satisfied with the short-term impact of the project funded through the grant?
5. Do you think that your CSO might have achieved greater results – in terms of the grant you received via the DemNet program – if you had also received some expert advising or training from ISC?
6. On a scale of 1 – 5, which one being the lowest and five being the highest score, how would you assess the prospects for sustainability of your CSO?
7. What is needed to improve the capacity of your CSO?

Grant Selection Panelists Focus Group

1. Were you well-prepared and informed by ISC to perform your review?
2. How would you assess the criteria/methodology used by ISC to select grantees? Based on your experience, would you recommend any changes?
3. Was the number of applications/grantees manageable?
4. Do you believe ISC assistance was well conceived and focused, whether in terms of support to civil society at large, or to particular focal areas?
5. Based on what you know, do you think the DemNet program was responsive to real needs within Macedonian society? Were certain needs or priorities overlooked?
6. Once grants were awarded, were you informed of the progress or results of the projects that you approved? Do you believe that these projects/NGOs were successful?

ISC Staff Focus Group

1. In terms of its approach and methodologies, what would you identify as ISC's core – unique - strengths in Macedonia?
2. Were there certain weaknesses? If yes, were these rectified during the course of the project?
3. What were some of the major lessons learned during the course of the project? Were these applied to project design, planning, implementation?
4. Did you agree with how the DemNet program evolved over time? Were certain priorities overlooked?
5. Looking back, do you agree with the NGOs that were selected to participate in DemNet? What about the focal areas? Were certain NGOs, types of CSOs, or focal areas overlooked?

6. What would you identify as the most significant results/impacts of the DemNet project in each of the following areas: (a) building NGO capacity (critical mass), (b) strengthening civil society in Macedonia, (c) improving the lives of ordinary citizens and local communities, and (d) Macedonian society?

CIRa Staff Focus Group

1. Are you satisfied with the training and advising that has been provided to you in terms of preparing to establish and manage your own NGO? Has anything been overlooked in terms of the support provided to you by ISC?
2. Do you feel confident in your capacity to manage and sustain your own NGO?
3. What benchmarks must still be achieved before becoming fully independent of ISC?
4. Do you believe that ISC started preparing you soon enough (was enough time invested) in preparing you to become an independent NGO?
5. Has CIRa undertaken a needs assessment of civil society (or will it) to inform its priorities and programs or services (either generally or with respect to focal areas)?
6. Will CIRa offer the same range of services as ISC? Elaborate.
7. Will CIRa continue using the same methodologies, approaches, models as ISC? Why? Why not?
8. What will distinguish CIRa from other intermediary support organizations in Macedonia such as MCIC or FOSIM? Will CIRa work with such groups to achieve synergies between various programs?
9. Has funding been secured from multiple donors? Which ones? For how long?

APPENDIX 4

List of References

CIRa Documentation

Activity Plan for November and December 2004

Promotional Brochure: Center for Institutional Development, "Creating Capacities for Change"

Strategic Plan (6 May 2003)

Workplan for 2004 [third draft]

ISC Program Documentation

Phase I

Summary Report for Phase I (April 1995 – March 1998)

Overview of DemNet I Results (April 1995 – March 1998)

Phase II

DemNet Program in Macedonia: Phase II Projects In the NGO Strengthening Component (1998-1999)

List of Recommended NGOs For Funding On Both Components of DemNet Program Phase II

Overview of Demnet II Results (April 1998 – March 2000)

Summary Report for Phase II (April 1998 – March 2000)

Table: Diversity of DemNet II NGOs Geographically and By Type

Table: Ethnic and Geographic Diversity of LEAP Communities in DemNet II

Workplan for October 1998 – March 2000 (30 September 1998)

Phase III

Community Action Program: LEAP Development and Implementation (Phases II-III)

Community Development Action Plan: A Guide for Local Practitioners

DemNet Program Contact List for CSO Partners, Panelists, and Training Consultants (1996 – 2001)

Evaluating ISC's Community Action Projects by Victoria Gellis (September 2003)

Implementing LEAPS: A Workshop for Macedonian Communities

ISC DemNet III Program: Map of NGO Project Activities

ISC Local Elections Small Grants Program 2000: Map of NGO Project Activities

Overview of DemNet III Results (June 1999 – March 2002)

Proposal For the Enhancement and Extension Of the DemNet Program in Macedonia (22 June 1999)

Quarterly Reports for Phase III (for reporting periods beginning in Jul. 1999 and ending in Dec. 2002)

Summary Report for Phase III (undated)

Tentative Activity Schedules (March – June 2001 and May – August 2001)

Trip Report of Paul Markowitz (22-24 September 2003)

Trip Report of Paul Markowitz (28 September – 1 October 2004)

Phase IV

DemNet Program Contact List for CSO Partners in DemNet III and IV

Performance Stories for DemNet III and IV

Proposal for Macedonia Democracy Network Phase IV (22 July 2002)

Quarterly Reports and Performance Indicator Grids for Phase IV (reporting periods beginning in Jan. 2003 and ending in Sep. 2004)

Update on Activities Improving the Status Of Roma In Macedonia (undated)

Workplan For Implementing CDAP for Poor Communities in Macedonia (undated)

Year 2003 Workplan [second draft] (1 January – 31 December)

Year 2004 Workplan [second draft] (1 January – 31 December)

Memorandum of Understanding with CIRa

Other

1998 Strategic Plan

USAID Macedonia Documents

Assessment Of the Civil Society Sector in Macedonia by Harry Blair et al. for Development Associates Inc. (28 August 2003)

Draft NGO Sustainability Index for Macedonia (2004)

Evaluation of the Macedonia DemNet Program [Task Order No. 805] by Thomas Cook and Mihajlo Popovski for Development Associates Inc. (February 2002)

Internal Polling Data (2000 – 2004) prepared by BRIMA or BSC Estek

Appendix 5

Evolution of the DemNet Program, Phases I – IV (1995 – 2004)

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	On-Going
Program Rationale and Aims	<p>To reach out to and serve as many CSOs as possible.</p> <p>Focus on environmental CSOs based on extent of environmental degradation in Macedonia, due to the greater capacity of environmental CSOs, and to bring together people of different backgrounds to focus on common concerns.</p> <p>Provision of grants for capacity building and project implementation to environmental CSOs.</p> <p>Training on organizational development topics implemented, in part, by Macedonian Training Team (MTT).</p>	<p>To pursue more focused programming and longer term assistance to a small sub-set of CSOs that might increasingly provide leadership and support to the sector.</p> <p>Also provide more structured model for community participation in the development of environmental action plans and to foster cross-sectoral cooperation to solve local problems.</p> <p>Capacity Building (22 CSOs) based on multi-faceted assistance including general training for groups of CSOs on an on-going basis, TA, and grants for capacity building and project implementation</p>	<p>To foster cross-sectoral partnerships and networking with the intent of positioning a select group of CSOs as leaders and mentors that are capable of pursuing projects of a wider scope and broader impact.</p> <p>Also, further build the capacity of CSOs with leadership potential. And, provide access to broader set of CSOs for project implementation.</p> <p>To expand participatory planning processes to socio-economic problems at the community level and provide for LEAP implementation.</p> <p>And, to provide cost-effective support to other USAID funded initiatives.</p> <p>Small Grants Program (95 CSOs) for project implementation (including earmarks for conflict mitigation and election activities)</p> <p>CSO Strengthening (15 'continuation' CSOs from Phase II) and Development (28 new CSOs) featuring specially tailored training for groups and individual CSOs based on organizational needs assessment, TA, and grants. LEAP Implementation (6 communities), TA and grant for follow-through to planning undertaken in Phase II.</p>	<p>To consolidate gains made in improving the role and sustainability of CSOs through capacity building to a core group of partners in a number of sub-sectors.</p> <p>To integrate CSOs more fully into the community and with other stakeholders by emphasizing public outreach and partnerships within and between sectors/sub-sectors.</p> <p>To expand the impact of CSOs by focusing on results.</p> <p>To expand participatory planning processes to poor communities and provide to subsequent implementation.</p> <p>CSO Support by Focal Area (36 CSOs in the areas of Gender and Marginalized, Anti-Trafficking, Youth, Conflict Management), featuring specially tailored training for groups and individual CSOs (both on capacity building and technical issues) based on organizational needs assessment, TA, and grants for capacity building, coalition support, and advocacy.</p>	<p>Networking Activities (beginning in Phase II)</p> <p>Information Dissemination and Outreach</p> <p>World Learning Study Tours (8 involving 70 CSOs and 79 participants)</p> <p>Sister Lake Study Tours (4, in Phase I only)</p> <p>U.S. based Internships (6)</p> <p>Regional Exchanges (7)</p>

Appendix 5

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	On-Going
Program Overview		LEAP Planning (5 communities) involving a series of three training sessions and grant for planning expenses.	CAP Planning and Implementation (5/4 communities), involving training, TA, and grants for planning and select implementation expenses	CAP Planning and Implementation (4/4 communities) involving intensive TA, incremental training, and grants for planning and select implementation expenses.	
					<i>TOTALS</i>
No. of Grantees	66 CSOs (70 grants)	27 CSOs	148 CSOs	40 CSOs (41 grants)	281 CSOs
CSO Trainees	150 CSOs	227 CSOs	265 CSOs	448 CSO participants	1,090 CSO participants (includes redundancies)
Individual Trainees	750 participants	754 participants	532 participants	1,717 individual participants	3,753 individual participants (includes redundancies)

APPENDIX 6

DemNet Partners by Phase

NGO	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Ecological Association Enhalon (Struga)				
Ecological Association Vila Zora (Veles)				
Center for Environmental Law and Public Participation (Skopje)				
Ecological Association Kalinka (Valandovo)				
Ecological Association Lipa (Kumanovo)				
Ecological Movement of Tetovo				
Women's Organization of Tetovo				
Humanitarian Association Mesecina (Gostivar)				
Bird Study and Protection Society of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Youth Council of Kumanovo				
Ecological Association Bios (Radovis)				
Ecological Movement of Macedonia				
Research Association of Student Biologists (Skopje)				
Environmental Association Breza (Kratovo)				
Women's Organization of Skopje				
Environmental Association Molika (Bitloa)				
Environmental Association Odek (Kavadarci)				
Movement of Ecologists of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Environmental Association Golak (Delcevo)				
Environmental Association Zdravec (Makedonska Kamenica)				
Women's Association Prestige (Bitola)				
Humanitarian Association Opae (Kumanovo)				
Women's Organization of Gostivar				
Moitete (Prelip)				
Macedonian Environmental Association (Skopje)				
Environmental Association Zdrav Zivot (Kocani)				
Environmental Association Zletovica (Probistip)				
Environmental Association Vinozito (Stip)				
Scouts' Organization Dimitar Vlahov (Veles)				
Young Researchers of Macedonia Peoni (Kratovo)				
Women's Organization of Kumanovo				
Ecological Association Natyra (Struga)				
Ecological Association Flora (Kumanovo)				
Women's Organization of Sveti Nikole				
Theater Youth of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Roma Women's Association ESMA (Skopje)				
Youth Council of Resen				
Eco-Media (Skopje)				
Ecological Association Opstanok (Skopje)				
Organization of Women Bisera (Ohrid)				
Environmental Association Izgrev (Sveti Nikole)				
Association of Physicists of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Center for Stone Arts of Macedonia (Kratovo)				
Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Kavadarci)				
Speleological Association Peoni (Skopje)				
Ecological Association Silina (Zletovo)				
Ecological Association of Prelip				
Association for the Protection of Nature (Skopje)				

Youth Environmental Information Center (Tetovo)				
Scouts Organization Braka Mladinovci (Skopje)				
Mountaineering Association Gorgi Naumov (Bitola)				
Organization of Albanian Women (Krusevo/Prelip)				
Ecological Association Licets (Vinitsa)				
Center for Environmental Journalism (Skopje)				
Organization of Albanian Women (Gostivar)				
Ecological Association Lazaropole (Skopje)				
Environmental Organization Kitka (Skopje)				
Environmental Association Kladenec (Pehcevo)				
Ecological Association Zletovitsa (Probistip)				
Ecological Association Vinozhito (Stip)				
Women's Organization of Struga				
Ecological Association Tsvet (Kratovo)				

NGO (cont.)	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Turk Women's Organization (Gostivar)				
Association of Agricultural Producers (Pehcevo)				
SOS Tel. Line for Women/Children Victims of Violence (Kumanovo)				
Organization for Animal Protection - SRNA (Skopje)				
Consumer's Organization of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Center for Civic Initiative (Prelip)				
Environmental Organization Javor (Kocani)				
Environmental Organization Tiskinec (Labunica)				
Union of Mountaineers of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Scout Union of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Women's Organization of Strumica				
Macedonian Interethnic Association - MIA (Skopje)				
Organization for Civic Initiative (Skopje)				
Environmental Association Deshat (Debar)				
Journalist Environmental Center (Skopje, split into ERINA and EPC)				
Association for Democratic Culture Toleranca (Struga)				
Union of Deaf and Mute of Macedonia (Skopje)				
Assoc for Improvement of Cure & Rehab. of Drug Addicts -Doverba				
HOPS (Skopje)				
Humanitarian Organization Vision (Debar)				
Humanitarian Association of Roma Mesecina (Debar)				
PHURT - Humanitarian Roma Association (Delcevo)				
Association of Bee Keepers (Kocani)				
Association for Protection of Children of Macednoia (Skopje)				
First Children's Embassy - Medzashi (Skopje)				
Association for Preventing Breast Cancer (Stip)				
Active of Independent Initiatives (Stip)				
Environmental Organization Planetum (Strumica)				
Citizens' Association Rubikon (Skopje)				
Association of Laid Off Workers (Probistip)				
Association of Citizens for Support of People with Psychosis (Skopje)				
Humanitarian Organization El Hilal (Skopje)				
Women's Organization of Kicevo				
Association of Citizens with Diabetes (Prelip)				
Bisphera (Bitola)				
Association of the Environment - MARS (Skopje)				
Journalist Environmental Law Center - Erina (Skopje)				
MK Humanitarian Center for Social People & Underdeveloped Regions				
Youth Council of Bitola				
Association of Ecologists - Ekolap (Labunista)				
Assoc. for Education, Democ., and Multi-Culture - Ortelius (Tetovo)				
Environmental Association Rosa (Caska)				
Assoc. for Development of Underdeveloped Areas - Vizija (Skopje)				
Balkans Association for Friendship and Cooperation (Bitola)				
Citizen's Association Friends of the World (Krusevo)				

Balkans Association for Friendship and Cooperation				
Environmental Association Jagoda				
Roma Association Cerenja (Stip)				
GAMA (Berovo)				
Felix – Assoc. for Prevention Work with Children, Youth, and Families				
Doverba (Kumanovo)				
Association for Education, Art, and Sport – Nijazi Bej (Resen)				
Association for Transactional Analysis – MATA (Skopje)				
Research Center for Gender Studies, Institute Euro Balkan (Skopje)				
ESE (Skopje)				
Crisis Center Hope (Skopje)				
HERA (Skopje)				
Association of Albanian Women – Perspektiva (Skopje)				
Izbor (Strumica)				
Cntr. for Asst. to People with Mental Handicaps – Poraka (Sv. Nikole)				
Multikultura (Tetovo)				
Association of Women in Education (Kavadarci)				
Romani Sukaripa (Prelip)				
For Happy Childhood (Skopje)				
Open Gate La Strada (Skopje)				
Center for Development of Urban Culture Babylon (Skopje)				

APPENDIX 7

Results of CSO Survey – 29 responses from CSOs

Institutional Background

1. Which of the following best describes your CSO (*circle one*)
 - a. Informal Association of Citizens/Serving Local Community [9 responses, 31%]
 - b. Membership or Professional Association, e.g. business, lawyers', teachers' association [1 response, 3%]
 - c. Interest-based/advocacy organization, e.g. environmental, consumers', women's group [5 responses, 17%]
 - d. Service organization, e.g. helping the elderly, orphans, persons with disabilities, HIV/Aids [8 responses, 28%]
 - e. Intermediary support organization, e.g. providing support to other CSOs [2 responses, 7%]
 - f. Other (*please specify*): Five [5] responses: (1) association, (2) research center, (3) think tank, (4) educational organization, (5) interest-based + services.

2. Our informal group or CSO first began its activities in (*specify year in which work began, not necessary the year the organization was formally registered*): 1998 [1 response], 2001 [3 responses], 2003 [4 responses], 2004 [1 response], remainder no response.

3. In which year(s) has your CSO received some form of DemNet Assistance? (<i>check all that apply</i>)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>13</u>

4. Please indicate what types of assistance your CSO received under DemNet Phase III (*circle all that apply*):
 - a. Our CSO did not receive any assistance during DemNet Phase III [7 responses, 24%]
 - b. CSO Strengthening Training and Advising [14 responses, 48%]
 - c. CSO Strengthening Grant [9 responses, 31%]
 - d. Community Partnership Training and Advising (LEAPs/CAPs) [5 responses, 17%]
 - e. Community Partnership Grants (LEAPs/CAPs) [4 responses 14%]
 - f. CSO Project Implementation Grants [2 responses, 7%]
 - g. Networking Meetings [6 responses, 21%]
 - h. Other (*please specify*): Two [2] responses: (1) multi-ethnic project, (2) not sure.
5. Please indicate your CSO's focal area of activity under Phase IV and DemNet (*circle one*):
 - a. Our CSO did not receive any assistance during DemNet Phase IV [1 response, 3%]
 - b. Conflict Management Focal Area [6 responses, 21%]
 - c. Community Development Focal Area (LEAPs, CAPs) [1 response, 3%]
 - d. Youth Empowerment and Participation Focal Area [9 responses, 31%]
 - e. Gender and Marginalized Groups Focal Area [8 responses, 28%]
 - f. Human Trafficking Focal Area [4 responses, 14%]
 - g. Special Project: Scavenging [no responses]

6. Please indicate the types of assistance your CSO has received under Phase IV of DemNet (*circle all that apply*):
- a. Our CSO did not receive assistance during Phase IV of DemNet [no responses]
 - b. Sustainability Training [19 responses, 66%]
 - c. Training of Trainers (TOT) [4 responses, 14%]
 - d. Organizational Strengthening Grant [6 responses, 21%]
 - f. Project Implementation Grant [16 responses, 55%]
 - g. LEAP/CAP Support Package [no responses]
 - h. Networking Meetings [6 responses, 21%]
 - i. Coalition Training [4 responses, 14%]
 - j. Coalition Grants [1 response, 3%]
 - k. Advocacy Training [9 responses, 31%]
 - l. Advocacy Grants [4 responses, 14%]
 - m. Technical Assistance in Media and Public Awareness [7 responses, 24%]
 - n. Other (*please specify*): One[1] response: training on self-financing
7. In general, how would rate the quality of the following types of assistance? :

	No Answer/ No Assistance	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
a. Advising by ISC Staff				3 [10%]	3 [10%]	23 [29%]
b. General Training for Groups of CSOs	3 [10%]			1 [3%]	8 [28%]	17 [59%]
c. Specialized Training for Individual CSOs	5 [17%]		1 [3%]	4 [14%]	7 [24%]	12 [41%]
d. Organizational Strengthening or Sustainability Grants	10 [35%]		2 [7%]	2 [7%]	6 [21%]	9 [31%]
e. Project Implementation Grants	11 [38%]		1 [3%]	1 [3%]	5 [17%]	11 [38%]
f. Community Action/Partnership Grants (LEAPs/CAPs)	19 [67%]	2 [7%]	2 [7%]		5 [17%]	1 [3%]
g. Coalition Grants	15 [52%]		2 [7%]	3 [10%]	4 [14%]	5 [17%]
h. Advocacy Grants	16 [55%]		2 [7%]		6 [21%]	5 [17%]
i. Networking Meetings	9 [31%]		2 [7%]	2 [7%]	8 [28%]	8 [28%]

8. On a scale of 1 – 5 (with one being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score), how sufficient was the assistance provided to your CSO via DemNet?

	Did Not Receive This Type of Assistance	1	2	3	4	5
a. Advising by ISC Staff	1 [3%]			1 [3%]	4 [14%]	23 [80%]
b. Training	2 [7%]			2 [7%]	5 [17%]	20 [69%]
c. Grant				2 [7%]	7 [24%]	20 [69%]

External Relations, Coalition Building, and Networking

9. Looking back, how would you assess the quality of your (CSO) relationship with each of the following organizations or institutions **prior** to your participation in the DemNet program?

	No Answer or No Relationship	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
a. Ordinary Citizens	<u>1</u> [3%]		<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>8</u> [28%]
b. Other CSOs in my community	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>7</u> [24%]
c. Other CSOs in nearby communities	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
d. Other CSOs active in the same field	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>10</u> [35%]
e. Other CSOs throughout the country	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>7</u> [24%]
f. Local Mass Media		<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>6</u> [20%]
g. National Mass Media	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
h. The Business Community	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
i. Political Parties	<u>14</u> [48%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
j. Labor or Trade Unions	<u>18</u> [62%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>6</u> [21%]		<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
k. Municipal Council	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>3</u> [10%]
l. Mayor	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>5</u> [17%]
m. Parliament of the R. of Macedonia	<u>19</u> [66%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
n. Government of R. of Macedonia, e.g. Ministries, Offices	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>2</u> [7%]

10. Today, how would you assess the quality of your (CSO) current relationship with each of the following organizations or institutions **as a result** of your participation in the DemNet program?

	No Answer or No Relationship	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
a. Ordinary Citizens				<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>16</u> [55%]
b. Other CSOs in my community	<u>1</u> [3%]			<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>15</u> [52%]
c. Other CSOs in nearby communities				<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>13</u> [45%]
d. Other CSOs active in the same field	<u>1</u> [3%]			<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>16</u> [55%]
e. Other CSOs throughout the country				<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>14</u> [48%]
f. Local Mass Media		<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>16</u> [55%]

g. National Mass Media	3 [10%]	1 [3%]	5 [17%]	4 [14%]	8 [28%]	8 [28%]
h. The Business Community	5 [17%]	2 [7%]	9 [31%]	6 [21%]	4 [14%]	3 [10%]
i. Political Parties	13 [45%]	2 [7%]	8 [28%]	4 [14%]	1 [3%]	1 [3%]
j. Labor or Trade Unions	15 [52%]	4 [14%]	4 [14%]	3 [10%]	3 [10%]	
k. Municipal Council	4 [14%]	3 [10%]	4 [14%]	5 [17%]	8 [28%]	5 [17%]
l. Mayor	3 [10%]	4 [14%]	3 [10%]	3 [10%]	9 [31%]	7 [24%]
m. Parliament of the R. of Macedonia	11 [41%]	2 [7%]	4 [14%]	3 [10%]	5 [17%]	3 [10%]
n. Government of the R. of Macedonia, e.g. Ministries or Offices	4 [14%]	1 [3%]	3 [10%]	7 [24%]	5 [17%]	9 [31%]

11. If your CSO is cooperating with the Government of R. of Macedonia, please specify with which ministries, offices, or bodies with which you are working and whether this cooperation is at the national or municipal level:

Ministry, Office, or Body	National or Municipal Level
Ministry of Labor and Social Policy	<u>National [11 mentions]/Local [5 mentions]</u>
Ministry of Education and Science	<u>National [8+2 mentions]/Local [6+1 mentions]</u>
Ministry of Interior	<u>National [7 mentions]/Local [2 mentions]</u>
Ministry of Justice	<u>National [4 mentions]/Local [1 mention]</u>
Ministry of Health	<u>National [3 mentions]/Local [3 mentions]</u>
Agency for Youth and Sports	<u>National [2 mentions]/Local [2 mentions]</u>
Natl. Commission on Anti-Trafficking	<u>National [2 mentions]</u>
	Single mentions at either level include: Ministry of Local Self-Government, Chamber of Lawyers, Ministry of Culture, Agency for Civil Servants, Ministry of Defense, Civil Defense Force, Office of the Public Prosecutor, Commission of Juvenile Delinquency, Ministry of Environment, Member of Parliament, City Government

12. Is your CSO a member of a broader issue or sector-based coalition or network? (*circle one*)

Yes [27 responses, 93%]

No [2 responses, 7%]

13. If yes to question 12., in which coalitions or networks does your CSO participate?

Among the domestic and regional networks cited: Union of Women of Macedonia, NGO Parliament, "All for Fair Trails," "It's Enough," SEGA, "Now," "Antiko," Balkan Bridge, Anti-Trafficking Network, "Resist, Say No," Macedonian Women's Lobby, Coalition for the Prevention of HIV/AIDs, "Negotino," Harm Reduction Network, "Kids of the Street," ECMI, Art for Social Change, "Objection for Peace," "Students for Themselves," Children's Rights Coalition, "Matusiteb," Western Balkan Youth, Students' Democratic Initiatives, Citizens' Association of Macedonia (GAMA), and the Macedonian Interethnic Association (MIA). CSO respondents also listed a number of regional and international networks of which they were a part.

14. If no to question 12., does your CSO plan to become part of a broader issue or sector-based coalition or network in the future? (circle one)

Yes [1 responses, 3%]

No [1 response 3%]

15. If yes to question 14., specify which ones (either existing or new)?

Among the domestic and regional networks cited: Anti-Trafficking Network, network of NGOs with PDS 4 training, women's network.

16. In general, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about working in broader coalitions or networks? (check all that apply)

	Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Working in coalitions helps CSOs to leverage their human and financial resources and assets.		<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>12 [41%]</u>	<u>11 [38%]</u>
b. Working in coalitions allows CSOs to achieve greater results than if we worked separately.			<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>16 [55%]</u>
c. Working in coalitions provides a valuable opportunity for information sharing.				<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>28 [97%]</u>
d. Working in coalitions allows our CSO to extend its reach and impact beyond our immediate community.				<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>22 [76%]</u>
e. Working in coalitions provides a valuable opportunity to transfer and learn skills.		<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>6 [21%]</u>	<u>21 [72%]</u>
f. Government and other official bodies are more responsive to a coalition than to an individual CSO.	<u>3 [10%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>11 [38%]</u>
g. Gaining media coverage is easier for a coalition than for an individual CSO.	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>	<u>13 [45%]</u>
h. Coalitions are ineffective because member CSOs can't agree on how to proceed.	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>
i. Coalitions are ineffective because it takes too long to reach a consensus among member CSOs.	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>6 [21%]</u>	<u>6 [21%]</u>	<u>11 [38%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>

j. Coalitions are ineffective because they do not produce any tangible results.	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
k. Coalitions are dominated by a single leader or CSO that forces its opinion/agenda on the other members.	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>8</u> [27%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
l. Working in a coalition prevents our CSO from promoting our own image and activities.	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	

17. Has participation in the DemNet program made your CSO more or less likely to participate in a broader issue or sector based coalition or network? (check one)	Less Likely	No Change	More Likely
	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>20</u> [69%]

Resource Development

18. From which of the following sources do you draw support? (check all that apply)

	Not Applicable	In the Past	Currently	Anticipated In Future
a. Grant from foreign donor(s)	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>26</u> [90%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
b. Financial contribution from foreign business(es)	<u>24</u> [83%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
c. In-kind contribution from foreign business(es)	<u>19</u> [66%]	<u>6</u> [21%]		<u>4</u> [14%]
d. Financial contribution from domestic business(es)	<u>14</u> [48%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
e. In-kind contribution from domestic business(s)	<u>18</u> [62%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
f. Financial contribution from individual(s)	<u>17</u> [59%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
g. In-kind contribution from individual(s)	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>16</u> [55%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
h. financial subsidy from municipal government	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>7</u> [24%]
i. Project grant from municipal government	<u>17</u> [59%]	<u>2</u> [7%]		<u>10</u> [35%]
j. Service contract from municipal government	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>9</u> [31%]
k. Financial subsidy from national government	<u>17</u> [59%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>8</u> [28%]
l. Project grant from national government	<u>21</u> [72%]		<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
m. Service contract from national government	<u>21</u> [72%]		<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
n. Membership dues/contributions	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>5</u> [17%]
o. Fees for services	<u>17</u> [59%]		<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
p. Income generation (economic) activities	<u>20</u> [69%]		<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
q. Volunteer labor	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>19</u> [66%]	<u>4</u> [14%]

19. If your organization has funding from foreign donors (between 2000 and 2004), from how many different foreign donors has it received assistance? (check one)	1	2	3 – 5	> 5
	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>12</u> [41%]

20. Currently, what percentage of your overall funding comes from foreign donors (check one)	None	< 10%	Up to 25%	Up to 50%	Up to 75%	Up to 90%	100%
	<u>4</u> [14%]			<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>3</u> [10%]

21. At present, my NGO has the financial and/or in-kind resources (including volunteer labor) to sustain itself for . . . (check one)	< 1 Year	1 – 2 Years	3 – 4 Years	5 Years or More
	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>14</u> [48%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>1</u> [3%]

22. To what extent do you credit participation in the DemNet program with improving the financial viability of your CSO? (check one)	Not Applicable	No Change	Slightly Improved	Greatly Improved
		<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>10</u> [25%]	<u>18</u> [62%]

23. Did the financial assistance your CSO received from DemNet allow you to leverage other funds in support of your project/organization (check one)	Did not Receive Financial Assistance	No Leverage	Yes, Leverage
	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>21</u> [72%]

Organizational and Management Capacity

24. At what stage have the following organizational structures and systems been established within your CSO?

	Existed Before DemNet Assistance	Instituted as a result of DemNet Assistance	Plan to Institute in Future as a Result of DemNet Assistance	Does not Exist/No Plans to Institute in the Future
a. Governing Board	<u>27</u> [93%]		<u>1</u> [3%]	
b. Charter/By-Laws	<u>23</u> [79%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	
c. Written Mission Statement (program)	<u>23</u> [79%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	
d. Self Designated/Appointed Leader	<u>11</u> [38%]			<u>8</u> [28%]
e. Elected Leader	<u>23</u> [79%]		<u>1</u> [3%]	
f. Full Time Professional Staff (paid)	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>7</u> [24%]
g. Part Time Professional Staff (paid)	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
h. Volunteer Staff	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]

i. Division of Labor Among Staff	<u>20</u> [69%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	
j. Written Job Descriptions	<u>18</u> [62%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	
k. Written Policies and Procedures	<u>15</u> [51%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	
l. Written Strategic Plan	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	
m. Written Annual Workplan	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
n. Fundraising Strategy	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
o. Media Plan	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	
p. Public Outreach Strategy	<u>6</u> [20%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	
q. Accounting/Financial Management System	<u>15</u> [51%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	
r. Independent Audits	<u>8</u> [27%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>14</u> [48%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
s. Inventory of Assets	<u>19</u> [66%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
t. Periodic Activity/Project Reports	<u>20</u> [69%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	
u. Periodic Financial Reports	<u>16</u> [55%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	
v. Published Annual Report	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
w. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	
x. Internal Training Capacity	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>13</u> [45%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	

25. Which best describes the situation of your CSO with respect to it's governing board? (<i>check one</i>)	No Governing Board	Inactive Governing Board	Active but Ineffective Governing Board	Active and Effective Governing Board
		<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>25</u> [86%]

26. How would you rate the strengths of your organization in each of the following areas:

	No Answer or Not Applicable	Very Weak	Weak	Average	Strong	Very Strong
a. Strategic Planning			<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>16</u> [55%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
b. Participatory Planning Methods	<u>1</u> [3%]			<u>13</u> [45%]	<u>11</u> [38%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
c. Priority Setting	<u>2</u> [7%]			<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>14</u> [48%]	<u>8</u> [28%]
d. Proposal Writing				<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>16</u> [55%]
e. Fundraising (financial resources)	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>5</u> [17%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>10</u> [35%]	<u>6</u> [21%]
f. Income Generation	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>1</u> [3%]
g. Generating In-Kind Contributions	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>3</u> [10%]	<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>2</u> [7%]
h. Volunteer Mobilization	Variable repeated (see q.) creating redundancies/inconsistencies in data.					
i. Organizational Management	<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>1</u> [3%]		<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>4</u> [14%]
j. Internal Democracy	<u>1</u> [3%]			<u>6</u> [21%]	<u>9</u> [31%]	<u>13</u> [45%]
k. Budgeting	<u>1</u> [3%]		<u>2</u> [7%]	<u>13</u> [45%]	<u>8</u> [28%]	<u>5</u> [17%]
l. Accounting/Financial Management	<u>1</u> [3%]		<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>7</u> [24%]	<u>12</u> [41%]	<u>8</u> [28%]
m. Project Design			<u>1</u> [3%]	<u>4</u> [14%]	<u>15</u> [52%]	<u>9</u> [31%]

n. Project Implementation	<u>1 [3%]</u>			<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>12 [41%]</u>	<u>15 [52%]</u>
o. Project Management	<u>1 [3%]</u>			<u>5 [17%]</u>	<u>13 [45%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>
p. Monitoring and Evaluation	<u>1 [3%]</u>			<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>12 [41%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>
q. Volunteer Mobilization	Variable repeated (see h.) creating redundancies/inconsistencies in data.					
r. Training	<u>2 [7%]</u>		<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>13 [45%]</u>	<u>8 [28%]</u>	<u>5 [17%]</u>
s. Media/Public Relations	<u>1 [3%]</u>		<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>5 [17%]</u>	<u>12 [41%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>
t. Citizen/Community Outreach	<u>1 [3%]</u>			<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>15 [52%]</u>	<u>6 [21%]</u>
u. Service Provision	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>
v. Policy Formulation	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>3 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>5 [17%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>
w. Advocacy and Lobbying	<u>2 [7%]</u>		<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>13 [45%]</u>	<u>3 [10%]</u>
x. Coalition-Building and Networking	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>3 [10%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>11 [38%]</u>	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>
y. Watchdog Activities	<u>4 [14%]</u>		<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>8 [28%]</u>	<u>14 [49%]</u>
z. Transparency	<u>3 [10%]</u>		<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>	<u>12 [41%]</u>
aa. Accountability	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>5 [17%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>8 [28%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>3 [10%]</u>
bb. Partnerships with Government	<u>8 [28%]</u>	<u>4 [14%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>7 [24%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>
cc. Partnerships with Business	<u>3 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>8 [28%]</u>	<u>14 [48%]</u>
dd. Achieving Tangible Results	<u>2 [7%]</u>			<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>11 [38%]</u>	<u>14 [48%]</u>

2. To what extent has your participation in the DemNet program helped your CSO to develop the following skills:

	No Assistance Provided Or No Answer	No Change	Somewhat Improved	Greatly Improved
a. Strategic Planning		3 [10%]	10 [35%]	16 [55%]
b. Participatory Planning Methods	2 [7%]	2 [7%]	14 [48%]	11 [38%]
c. Priority Setting	3 [10%]	2 [7%]	10 [35%]	14 [48%]
d. Proposal Writing	3 [10%]	1 [3%]	7 [24%]	18 [62%]
e. Fundraising (financial resources)	4 [14%]	4 [14%]	12 [41%]	9 [31%]
f. Income Generation	4 [14%]	8 [28%]	12 [41%]	5 [17%]
g. Generating In-Kind Contributions	5 [17%]	8 [28%]	11 [38%]	5 [17%]
h. Volunteer Mobilization	Variable repeated (see q.) creating redundancies/inconsistencies in data.			
i. Organizational Management	3 [10%]	4 [14%]	9 [31%]	13 [45%]
j. Internal Democracy	2 [7%]	9 [31%]	7 [24%]	11 [38%]
k. Budgeting	2 [7%]	6 [21%]	11 [38%]	10 [35%]
l. Accounting/Financial Management	2 [7%]	6 [21%]	5 [17%]	16 [55%]
m. Project Design	2 [7%]	6 [21%]	9 [31%]	12 [41%]
n. Project Implementation	2 [7%]	2 [7%]	8 [28%]	17 [59%]
o. Project Management	2 [7%]	2 [7%]	10 [35%]	15 [52%]
p. Volunteer Mobilization	Variable repeated (see h.) creating redundancies/inconsistencies in data.			
q. Training	4 [14%]	5 [17%]	9 [31%]	11 [38%]
r. Communication and PR Skills	2 [7%]	2 [7%]	11 [38%]	14 [48%]
s. Interaction with the Media	3 [10%]	3 [10%]	8 [28%]	15 [52%]
t. Citizen/Community Outreach	6 [21%]	7 [24%]	11 [38%]	5 [17%]
u. Service Provision	5 [17%]	4 [14%]	9 [31%]	11 [38%]
v. Policy Formulation	1 [3%]	5 [17%]	6 [21%]	17 [59%]
w. Advocacy and Lobbying	2 [7%]	10 [35%]	11 [38%]	6 [21%]
x. Coalition-Building and Networking	3 [10%]	5 [17%]	10 [35%]	11 [38%]
y. Watchdog Activities	3 [10%]	3 [10%]	9 [31%]	14 [48%]
z. Transparency	5 [17%]	8 [28%]	10 [35%]	6 [21%]
aa. Accountability	7 [24%]	12 [41%]	7 [24%]	3 [10%]
bb. Partnerships with Government	3 [10%]	4 [14%]	8 [28%]	14 [48%]
cc. Partnerships with Business	3 [10%]	3 [10%]	7 [24%]	16 [55%]

Level of Activity

28. Which of the following categories best describes the level of activity of your CSO? (*circle one*)

- a. **Inactive** at this time. [no responses]
- b. **Low activity.** Occasional meetings of members or supporters. One activity or event each year if there are sufficient resources. [no responses]
- c. **Moderate activity.** Fairly regular meetings of members or supporters. Several activities. Some outreach to the community. Some ability to mobilize volunteers. [5 responses, 17%]
- d. **High activity.** Routine meetings of members or supporters. On-going activities, events, and/or service-provision. Routine interaction with community and with government, business, and/or media at the local level. Ability to mobilize a reliable cadre of volunteers. [13 responses, 45%]
- e. **Intense activity.** Regular meetings of members or supporters. Multiple projects on-going. Frequent interaction with community and with government, business, and/or media at the local and/or national level. Extensive cadre of volunteers available to the CSO. [11 responses, 38%]

29. To what extent do you credit participation in the DemNet program with increasing the level of activity of your CSO? (<i>check one</i>)	No Change	Slightly Improved	Greatly Improved
	<u>1 [3%]</u>	<u>10 [35%]</u>	<u>18 [62%]</u>

Lobbying and Advocacy

30. Does your CSO undertake any of the following activities (*circle all that apply*):

- a. No activity in this area. [4 responses, 14%]
- b. Monitor issues and public policies of interest to your CSO and its members/constituents? [13 responses, 45%]
- c. Formulate recommendations pertaining to government priorities, strategies, policies, or laws? [14 responses, 48%]
- d. Solicit public input to inform your CSOs recommendations on gov. priorities or public policies? [5 responses, 17%]
- e. Conduct public information and advocacy in support of your policy recommendations? [10 responses, 34%]
- f. Build an issue-based coalition to advocate your policy recommendations? [5 responses, 17%]
- g. Lobby government officials/decision-makers to support your policy recommendations? [16 responses, 55%]
- h. Participate in official committees to advise on priorities, draft strategies, draft laws, or new policies? [10 responses, 34%]
- i. Track which of your recommendations are adopted (in the form of decisions, strategies, or laws)? [9 responses, 31%]
- j. Monitor the implementation of decisions, policies, or laws on which you had input? [6 responses, 21%]

31. At what levels has your CSO undertaken advocacy? (*circle all that apply*)

- a.. Municipality [11 responses, 38%]
- b. National Government [17 responses, 59%]
- c. No Advocacy Activity [1 response, 3%]

32. How confident is your CSO in approaching municipal government representatives and offering recommendations on specific issues, strategies, or policies? (*if applicable, check one*)

Not Confident	Somewhat Confident	Very Confident	No Advocacy
	<u>5 [17%]</u>	<u>22 [76%]</u>	<u>2 [7%]</u>

33. How confident is your CSO in approaching national government representatives and offering recommendations on specific issues, strategies, policies, or laws? (*if applicable, check one*)

Not Confident	Somewhat Confident	Very Confident	No Advocacy
<u>2 [7%]</u>	<u>9 [31%]</u>	<u>15 [52%]</u>	<u>3 [10%]</u>

34. Which best describes your experience lobbying government ? (*circle one*)

- a. Our CSO is not currently engaged in advocacy and/or lobbying efforts. [6 responses, 21%]
- b. Government representatives refused to meet with our CSO to discuss public policy issues. [3 responses, 10%]
- c. Government representatives met with our CSO but did not adopt any of our recommendations. [1 response, 3%]
- d. Government representatives worked with out CSO and partially adopted our recommendations either in a decision, strategy, policy, or law. [16 responses, 55%]
- e. Government representatives worked with our CSO and fully adopted our recommendations either in a decision, strategy, policy, or law. [3 responses, 10%]

35. Specifically, what government decisions, strategies, policies, or laws has your NGO been able to impact. (*please list*)

- National Youth Strategy
- Amendments to the Student Standard Law
- Law on Parliamentary Elections (provisions pertaining to quotas for women candidates and election observation)
- Amendments to laws governing domestic violence and gender issues
- Anti-trafficking measures
- Decentralization of services for persons suffering from drug abuse
- Law on the Family
- Labor Law (on provisions pertaining the employment of persons with disabilities)

- Penal Code (provisions on juvenile penal measures)
- Actions to protest expensive phone charges

36. Is the decision, strategy, policy, or law on which your CSO had input being implemented by the responsible government body? (*circle one*):

- a. Yes [9 responses, 31%]
- b. No [10 responses, 35%]
- c. No Answer [10 responses, 35%]

37. To what extent has participation in the DemNet project helped your CSO to become more effective in lobbying and advocacy? (<i>check one</i>)	No Activity	Has Not Helped Much	Has Helped Somewhat	Has Helped Significantly
		10 [3%]	12 [41%]	14 [48%]

Service Delivery

38. To what extent has participation in the DemNet program helped your CSO to . . .

	No Answer or No Service Provision	Has Not Helped	Has Helped Somewhat	Has Helped Significantly
a. Expand the number or types of services offered to beneficiaries?	3 [10%]		10 [35%]	16 [55%]
b. Improve the quality of services offered to beneficiaries?	5 [17%]		9 [31%]	15 [52%]
c. Monitor and measure the quality of services provided to beneficiaries.	4 [14%]	1 [3%]	8 [28%]	16 [55%]
d. Reach greater numbers of beneficiaries?	4 [14%]		6 [21%]	19 [66%]
e. Track the number of beneficiaries being served.	4 [14%]	1 [3%]	9 [31%]	15 [52%]
f. Improve ability/flexibility to respond to newly developing needs?	2 [7%]	1 [3%]	12 [41%]	14 [45%]
g. Coordinate with responsible government bodies on the provision of services?	4 [14%]	6 [21%]	12 [41%]	7 [24%]

39. On what basis does your CSO decide to expand existing services or introduce new services? (*circle all that apply*):

- a. Based on the priorities of foreign donors/international partners [7 responses, 24%]
- b. Based on a formal needs assessment and prioritization process [12 responses, 41%]
- c. Based on the expertise and capacity of our staff [17 responses, 59%]
- d. Based on requests from our existing beneficiaries [13 responses, 45%]
- e. Based on requests from the community [15 responses, 52%]
- f. Based on discussions with municipal government representatives [3 responses, 10%]
- g. Based on discussions with national government representatives, e.g. ministries [13 responses, 45%]
- h. Based on research [18 responses, 62%]

40. In the past year, approximately how many people have received services offered by your CSO?

Range = 30 – 8,500 direct beneficiaries (and up to 17,000 taking into account indirect beneficiaries).
Total number of direct beneficiaries cited: 28,296+ people.

Peer Assessment

41. What domestic CSOs would you identify as providing leadership and support to the broader community of civil society organizations?

Domestic CSOs with multiple mentions: FOSIM, ECE, MCIC. Domestic CSOs with single mentions: Antiko, Open Gate, MIA, Trust, HOPS, HERA, Rubikon, Helsinki Committee, CCI, GAMA.

42. What domestic CSOs would you identify as leaders in the field of advocacy?

Domestic CSOs with multiple mentions: ESE and Megashi. Domestic CSOs with single mentions: GAMA, Union of Women of Macedonia, FOSIM, and Transparency-Macedonia.

43. What domestic CSOs would you identify as leaders in the field of service provision?

Domestic CSOs with multiple mentions: Trust. Domestic CSOs with single mentions: Euro Balkan, Open Gate, ECE, HERA, HOPS, Izbor (Strumica), and the Shelter Center (Skopje)

NGO (cont.)	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Macedonian Women Jurist Association – TEMIS (Skopje)				
Youth Educational Forum (Skopje)				
Association of Citizens – Peace Action (Prelip)				
Youth Council (Prelip)				
Association of Students from Medical Faculty – EMSA (Skopje)				
Association of Clubs of Cured Alcoholics (Skopje)				
Association of Citizens – Sunflower (Skopje)				
Assoc. of Citizens for Democracy and Prosperity – Kolegium (Bitola)				
Association for Education and Culture – Millenium (Gostivar)				
Association of Citizens – Bairska Svetlina (Bitola)				
European Forum (Miravci)				
HDZR Kham (Delcevo)				

NOTE: This listing does not include CSOs that received small grants during phase III (approximately 118 small grants were awarded across six grant rounds).

APPENDIX 8

Partner CSO Relationships with Various Stakeholders

CSO Respondents' Relationship with Ordinary Citizens

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND ORDINARY CITIZENS			
	<i>Before DemNet Assistance</i>	<i>AFTER DEMNET ASSISTANCE</i>	Δ
Very Good	8 CSOs [28% of respondents]	16 CSOs [55% of respondents]	↑28%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	8 [28%]	↑4%
Fair	9 [31%]	5 [17%]	↓14%
Poor	4 [14%]	None	↓14%
Very Poor	None	None	-
No Relationship/ Ans.	1 [3%]	None	↓3%

CSO Respondents' Relationship with Other CSOs

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND OTHER CSOs IN THE COMMUNITY			
	<i>Before DemNet Assistance</i>	<i>AFTER DEMNET ASSISTANCE</i>	Δ
Very Good	7 CSOs [24% of respondents]	15 CSOs [52% of respondents]	↑28%
Good	9 CSOs [31%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↓3%
Fair	6 CSOs [21%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↓4%
Poor	5 CSOs [17%]	None	↓17%
Very Poor	1 CSO [3%]	None	↓3%
No Relationship/ Ans.	1 CSO [3%]	None	↓3%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND CSOs IN NEARBY COMMUNITIES			
	<i>Before DemNet Assistance</i>	<i>After DemNet Assistance</i>	Δ
Very Good	6 CSOs [21% of respondents]	13 CSOs [45% of respondents]	↑21%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	12 CSOs [41%]	↑17%
Fair	4 CSOs [14%]	4 CSOs [14%]	-
Poor	5 CSOs [17%]	None	↓17%
Very Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	None	↓14%
No Relationship/ Ans.	3 CSOs [10%]	None	↓10%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND OTHER CSOs ACTIVE IN THE SAME FIELD			
	<i>Before DemNet Assistance</i>	<i>After DemNet Assistance</i>	Δ
Very Good	10 CSOs [35% of respondents]	16 CSOs [55%]	↑20%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	10 CSOs [35%]	↑11%
Fair	4 CSOs [14%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓7%
Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	None	↓10%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	None	↓10%
No Relationship/ Ans.	2 CSOs [7%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓4%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND OTHER CSOs THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	7 CSOs [24% of respondents]	14 CSOs [48%]	↑24%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	12 CSOs [41%]	↑17%
Fair	7 CSOs [24%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓14%
Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	None	↓10%
Very Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	None	↓14%
No Relationship/ Ans.	1 CSO [3%]	None	↓ 3%

CSO Respondents' Relationship with the Mass Media

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND LOCAL MASS MEDIA			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	6 CSOs [20% of respondents]	16 CSOs [55%]	↑35%
Good	7 CSOs [24%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑ 4%
Fair	10 CSOs [35%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓28%
Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓ 3%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓ 3%
No Relationship/ Ans.	None	None	-

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND NATIONAL MASS MEDIA			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	4 CSOs [14% of respondents]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑14%
Good	6 CSOs [21%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑ 7%
Fair	6 CSOs [21%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓ 7%
Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↑ 3%
Very Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓11%
No Relationship/ Ans.	5 CSOs [17%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓ 7%

CSO Respondents' Relationship with Businesses

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	1 CSO [3% of respondents]	3 CSOs [10% of respondents]	↑ 7%
Good	2 CSOs [7%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 7%
Fair	3 CSOs [10%]	6 CSOs [21%]	↑11%
Poor	10 CSOs [35%]	9 CSOs [31%]	↓ 4%
Very Poor	4 CSOs [14%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↓ 7%
No Relationship/ Ans.	9 CSOs [31%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↓14%

CSO Respondents' Relationship with Political Parties and Labor Unions

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND POLITICAL PARTIES			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	1 CSO [3%] of respondents	1 CSO [3% of respondents]	-
Good	1 CSO [3%]	1 CSO [3%]	-
Fair	5 CSOs [17%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓ 3%
Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑ 4%
Very Poor	1 CSO [3%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↑ 7%
No Relationship/ Ans.	14 CSOs [48%]	13 [45%]	↓ 3%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND LABOR/TRADE UNIONS			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	1 CSO [3% of respondents]	None	↓ 3%
Good	1 CSO [3%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↑ 7%
Fair	None	3 CSOs [10%]	↑10%
Poor	6 CSOs [21%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓ 7%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 4%
No Relationship/ Ans.	18 CSOs [62%]	15 CSOs [52%]	↓10%

CSO Respondents' Relationship with Government Bodies

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND MUNICIPAL COUNCIL			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	3 CSOs [10% of respondents]	5 CSOs [17% of respondents]	↑ 7%
Good	3 CSOs [10%]	8 CSOs [28%]	↑18%
Fair	3 CSOs [10%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↑ 7%
Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓10%
Very Poor	6 CSOs [21%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓11%
No Relationship/ Ans.	7 CSOs [24%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓10%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND MAYOR			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	5 CSOs [17% of respondents]	7 CSOs [24% of respondents]	↑ 7%
Good	5 CSOs [17%]	9 CSOs [31%]	↑14%
Fair	3 CSOs [10%]	3 CSOs [10%]	-
Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓14%
Very Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 4%
No Relationship/ Ans.	6 CSOs [21%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓11%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA		
Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ

Very Good	2 CSOs [7% of respondents]	3 CSOs [10%] of respondents]	↑ 3%
Good	2 CSOs [7%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↑10%
Fair	2 CSOs [7%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↑ 3%
Poor	3 CSOs [10%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↑ 4%
Very Poor	1 CSO [3%]	2 CSOs [7%]	↑4%
No Relationship/ Ans.	19 [66%]	11 CSOs [41%]	↓25%

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSOs AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDINA			
	Before DemNet Assistance	After DemNet Assistance	Δ
Very Good	2 CSOs [7% of respondents]	9 CSOs [31% of respondents]	↑24%
Good	6 CSOs [21%]	5 CSOs [17%]	↓ 4%
Fair	2 CSOs [7%]	7 CSOs [24%]	↑17%
Poor	6 CSOs [21%]	3 CSOs [10%]	↓11%
Very Poor	7 CSOs [24%]	1 CSO [3%]	↓21%
No Relationship/ Ans.	6 [21%]	4 CSOs [14%]	↓ 7%

APPENDIX 9

Results of the LEAP/CAP Survey

LEAP/CAP Community: 10 responses from Bair, Berovo, Debar, Delchevo, Kavadarci, Krushevo, Mirovci, Pehchevo, Sveti Nikole, and Tetovo

1. Was your community involved in a LEAP or a CAP project?
 - a. LEAP (EAP) [3 responses, 30%]
 - b. CAP (CDAP) [7 responses, 70%]
2. What is the size of the community in which the LEAP or CAP process was introduced?

[individual responses, 800, 2,200, 5,000, 5,650, 10,000, 17,000, 18,528, 37,189]

3. In which year(s) has your community received DemNet assistance in support of a LEAP or CAP project? (check <u>all</u> that apply)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>

* No response = 1

4. In general, how would rate the quality of the following types of assistance your organization received from ISC DemNet? (check all that apply):

	No Assistance in this Area	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
a. Advising by ISC Staff					<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>8 [80%]</u>
b. General Training for Groups of CSOs	<u>1 [10%]</u>				<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>6 [60%]</u>
c. Specialized Training for Individual CSOs	<u>2 [20%]</u>			<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>4 [40%]</u>
d. Organizational Strengthening or Sustainability Grants	<u>1 [10%]</u>		<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>4 [40%]</u>
e. Project Implementation Grants			<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>
f. Community Action/Partnership Grants and Training (LEAPs/CAPs)	<u>1 [10%]</u>				<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>7 [70%]</u>
g. Coalition Grants	<u>8 [80%]</u>				<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [10%]</u>

h. Advocacy Grants	<u>9 [90%]</u>				<u>1 [10%]</u>	
i. Networking Meetings	<u>3 [30%]</u>		<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>2 [20%]</u>

5. On a scale of 1 – 5 (with one being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score), how sufficient was the assistance provided to your CSO via DemNet?

Did Not Receive This Type of Assistance		1	2	3	4	5
a. Advising by ISC Staff				<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>7 [70%]</u>
b. Training				<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>2 [20%]</u>	<u>7 [70%]</u>
c. Grant			<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>

6. Which of the following project participants was provided with training on the LEAP/CAP methodology? (*circle all that apply*):
- a. Representatives of Lead CSO [6 responses, 60% of CSOs]
 - b. Some members of the Citizens' Committee (Citizen's Group) [6 responses, 60%]
 - c. All members of the Citizens' Committee (Citizen's Group) [4 responses, 40%]
 - d. Some members of the Stakeholders' Group [5 no responses, 50%]
 - e. All members of the Stakeholders' Group [no responses]
 - f. No-one [none]
7. In practice, to what extent do you believe all participants in the project understood the LEAP/CAP process? (*check one*):
- a. Not at all [no responses]
 - b. Somewhat [no responses]
 - c. Adequately [1 response, 10%]
 - d. Well [7 responses, 70%]
 - e. Completely [2 responses, 20%]
8. During the **planning phase** of the environmental action plan (EAP) or the community development action plan (CDAP), to what extent were the following participants informed on progress being made? (*check all that apply*):

	Not Informed	Periodically Informed	Regularly Informed
Lead CSO			<u>10 [100%]</u>
Citizens Committee		<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>9 [90%]</u>

(Group)			
Stakeholder Group	<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>6 [60%]</u>
Citizens		<u>5 [50%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>
Local Media		<u>4 [40%]</u>	<u>6 [60%]</u>
Other CSOs		<u>7 [70%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>
The Business Community		<u>7 [70%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>
Local Government Bodies		<u>3 [30%]</u>	<u>7 [70%]</u>
Public Institutions	<u>1[10%]</u>	<u>4 [40%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>

9. During the **implementation phase** of the environmental action plan (EAP) or the community development action plan (CDAP), to what extent were each of the following participants informed on progress being made?

	Not Informed	Periodically Informed	Regularly Informed
Lead CSO			<u>10 [100%]</u>
Citizens Committee/Stakeholder Group		<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>9 [90%]</u>
Implementation Group(s)		<u>5 [50%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>
Citizens		<u>4 [40%]</u>	<u>6 [60%]</u>
Local Media		<u>4 [40%]</u>	<u>6 [60%]</u>
Other CSOs	<u>1[10%]</u>	<u>4 [40%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>
The Business Community		<u>7 [70%]</u>	<u>3 [30%]</u>
Local Government Bodies		<u>1 [10%]</u>	<u>9 [90%]</u>
Public Institutions		<u>5 [50%]</u>	<u>5 [50%]</u>

10. Once the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP) was approved by the municipal council, was it published?
- Yes, published [10 responses, 100%]
 - No, not published
 - No, not approved
11. If yes to question 10, to whom were copies provided? (*circle all that apply*):
- Lead CSO [9 responses, 90%]
 - All members of the Citizens' Committee (Group) [7 responses, 70%]
 - All members of the Stakeholders' Group [1 response, 10%]
 - Local Media Outlets [7 responses, 70%]
 - Other CSOs [6 responses, 60%]
 - Businesses [5 responses, 50%]
 - Local Government Bodies [9 responses, 90%]
 - Public Institutions [7 responses, 70%]
 - Available to Citizens Upon Request at Lead CSO or Municipal Government Office [9 responses, 90%]
 - Other. Please specify: Three [3] responses.

12. Did the lead CSO or Citizen's Committee work with the local mass media to publicize the approval of the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP)?
 - a. Yes [10 responses, 100%]
 - b. No

13. Has your community been able to begin implementation on any of the priorities identified in its environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP)?
 - a. Yes, one [2 responses, 20%]
 - b. Yes, more than one [8 responses, 80%]
 - c. No, none [no responses]

14. If yes to question 13, has implementation been successfully completed, i.e. the solution to the priority problem/need has been achieved?
 - a. No, none [1 response, 10%]
 - b. Yes, one priority achieved [3 responses, 30%]
 - c. Yes, more than one priority achieved [6 responses, 60%]

- 14(a). If multiple priorities were implemented, were the priorities pursued in the order they were ranked in the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP)?
 - a. Yes, in order of priority [8 responses, 80%]
 - b. No, not in order of priority [2 responses, 20%]
 - c. No, multiple priorities not implemented [no responses]

15. Has a local body or group of people been tasked with monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP)?
 - a. Yes [8 responses, 80%]
 - b. No [2 responses, 20%]

16. If yes to question 15, which of the following monitoring activities are being undertaken? (*circle all that apply*):
 - a. Ensuring that implementation efforts conform to original goals and targets. [6 responses, 60%]
 - b. Measuring progress toward achieving expected results [5 responses, 50%]
 - c. Determining whether progress is occurring according to the project time schedule. [4 responses, 40%]
 - d. Determining whether actual implementation costs are in line with those projected in the project budget. [3 responses 30%]
 - e. No monitoring is being undertaken. [2 responses, 20%]

17. Has your community received inquiries from other communities to learn how to establish a LEAP/CAP process?
 - a. Yes [9 responses, 90%]
 - b. No [1 response, 10%]

18. Has your CSO made any effort to promote the LEAP/CAP model to communities beyond your own or to other CSOs?
 - a. Yes [9 responses, 90%]

- b. No [1 response, 10%]
19. To your knowledge, have any other communities introduced the LEAP/CAP model as a result of these inquiries or your CSO's outreach efforts?
- a. Yes. *Please specify how many:* [6 responses, 60%]
- b. No [4 responses, 40%]
20. Have the partnerships between civil society – government – business that were established as a result of the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP) project been maintained?
- a. No [no responses]
- b. Yes, partially maintained, although this might have been done better or more thoroughly. [2 responses 20%]
- c. Yes, well maintained. [8 responses, 80%]
21. As a result of LEAP/CAP training, planning, and implementation, how much more confident do you feel in approaching local government to advise or advocate on issues of importance to the community?
- a. There has been no change. [no responses]
- b. Our CSO is somewhat more confident. [6 responses, 60%]
- c. Our CSO is significantly more confident. [4 responses 40%]
22. Do you think that the local government in your community views your CSO as a partner in development as a result of your leadership of the environmental action plan (EAP) or community development action plan (CDAP) project?
- a. No, actually our relationship with the local government has gotten worse. [no responses]
- b. No, there has been no change in our relationship with the local government. [5 responses, 50%]
- c. Yes, the local government is somewhat more inclined to view our CSO as a partner in development. [4 responses, 40%]
- d. Yes, the local government absolutely treats our CSO as a partner in development. [1 response, 10%]
23. In your opinion, and to what extent, has the local government been more inclined to use participatory decision-making as a result of the LEAP/CAP process?
- a. They are not more inclined to use participatory decision-making.
- b. They are somewhat more inclined to use participatory decision-making. [10 responses, 100%]
- c. They are significantly more inclined to use participatory decision-making.
24. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The LEAP/CAP process allowed our community to more effectively leverage the knowledge, skills, and talents of its citizens.
- a. Definitely do not agree [1 response, 10%]
- b. Do not agree [1 response, 10%]
- c. Neither agree nor disagree [2 responses, 20%]
- d. Somewhat agree [3 responses, 30%]
- e. Definitely agree [3 responses, 30%]

APPENDIX 10

Lessons Learned (LEAPs/ CAPs) 1996 – 2003

During the planning, implementation and evaluation of ISC-sponsored activities in Macedonia and elsewhere, several issues were identified as important lessons that need to be considered when developing a model for working with poor communities. We have grouped these lessons into several categories:

Conceptualization and Development of Approach

- ISC/VT and MK developed the concept and the draft approach, all material were prepared before the implementation of the model
- Draft approach was circulated to relevant organizations/institutions/individuals in order to incorporate their experience and expertise

Community Selection

- Previous community action plans (LEAP/CAP) focused on relatively small communities. Smaller communities are easier to manage, the results can be seen sooner and the information sharing should be easier. Working in larger communities requires a specific approach designed in consideration of the challenges of working with larger communities.
- The partner CSO needs to be carefully selected through a detailed and rigorous screening process to ensure the effectiveness of the CSO. The selection criteria should include prior training, experience managing community projects, collaborative relationships with local authorities and other CSOs, knowledge of community issues and media relations.
- Site visits by ISC/MK staff to CSOs are an absolute necessity in the selection process
- Letters of recommendation/support from various stakeholders in the community should be a requirement
- The selection process of the community and CSO partners needs to be multi-layered including an application review; site visits, reference checks, as well as a financial and administrative review
- The time period between expert panel selection, community site visit and final selection needs to be shortened
- ISC/MK's technical assistance process to grantees in the final stages before the grant is awarded is an essential component for sound project design
- Direct assistance to CSOs in the areas of application completion and budgeting in tandem with proposed activities is necessary
- Community plan needs to be publicized and disseminated as widely as possible using diverse and innovative means of communications to secure community penetration

Community Planning Process

- ISC/MK needs to provide a set of minimum standards for applicant communities for the following areas:
CSO selection process, selection of local coordinator(s), public outreach/awareness, implementation planning

- Training design should focus on community-based training for CSO members and the Initiator's Group. Community-based training reaches more people; makes ISC/MK's presence more visible to the community, allows for modification based on learning styles, enables equal opportunity for every member, provides more direct monitoring mechanisms and is cost effective
- Some group process skills will be incorporated into training on methodology. These will include: communication skills, facilitation skills, team building, decision making, etc.
- The salience of visioning needs to be reviewed in order to make it more relevant to the facts on the ground. The visioning process should be shortened (not more than three hours)
- The comprehensiveness of the needs/issues assessment will be minimized initially. The assessment will consist of a community profile or basic community fact sheet prepared by the CSO
- The planning process needs to be significantly shortened in order to achieve more quickly concrete, visible results that serve as motivators for further involvement;
- The project will receive wide publicity and generate involvement through the Community Forum, which will be open to the entire community;
- There is a need for baseline data (community profile) and an extensive survey of residents on their opinions and views in regard to their community;
- The project design must incorporate clear and specific priority setting methodology by providing examples or case studies or other means;
- ISC/MK's restrictions on implementation projects must be clearly stated and communicated
- The draft action plan needs to be widely disseminated, discussed and agreed upon by the various stakeholders;
- Provide example of successful community development action plans in Macedonia and beyond generated by the proposed model of community development
- Secure Municipality Council support throughout the entire process or to the extent possible (through letters of support, approval of agreement; approval of action plan, participation in implementation planning, etc.)
- Ensure communication between marginalized or poor communities and local authorities

Implementation/Monitoring/Evaluation

- Communities should develop the implementation plan;
- ISC/MK needs to take an active role in reviewing the implementation plan in order to assess the communities' ability to implement the proposed project(s);
- ISC/MK needs to provide training on the development of implementation plan and/or effective implementation of projects;
- Institutions/organizations, responsible for or impacted by implementation should be actively involved as early as possible in the process (invited to join working groups, sign agreements with stakeholders, participate in designing the project proposals);
- Mandatory site visits by ISC/MK are needed prior to the award of implementation grant(s);
- A monitoring plan should be an integral part of the implementation proposal;
- A formal evaluation should take place at the end of the process